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# WORKS

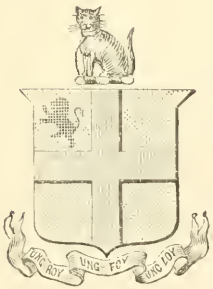
OF

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

# EDMUND BURKE.

FIFTH EDITION.

VOL. V.

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# OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

# CONDUCT OF THE MINORITY,

PARTICULARLY IN THE

# LAST SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.

ADDRESSED TO

THE DUKE OF PORTLAND AND
LORD FITZWILLIAM.

1793.

# LETTER

TO

## HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

MY DEAR LORD, — The paper which I take the liberty of sending to your Grace was, for the greater part, written during the last session. A few days after the prorogation some few observations were added. I was, however, resolved to let it lie by me for a considerable time, that, on viewing the matter at a proper distance, and when the sharpness of recent impressions had been worn off, I might be better able to form a just estimate of the value of my first opinions.

I have just now read it over very coolly and deliberately. My latest judgment owns my first sentiments and reasonings, in their full force, with regard both to persons and things.

During a period of four years, the state of the world, except for some few and short intervals, has filled me with a good deal of serious inquietude. I considered a general war against Jacobins and Jacobinism as the only possible chance of saving Europe (and England as included in Europe) from a truly frightful revolution. For this I have been censured, as receiving through weakness, or spreading through fraud and artifice, a false alarm. Whatever others may think of the matter, that alarm, in my mind, is by no means quieted. The state of affairs *abroad*

is not so much mended as to make me, for one, full of confidence. At *home*, I see no abatement whatsoever in the zeal of the partisans of Jacobinism towards their cause, nor any cessation in their efforts to do mischief. What is doing by Lord Lauderdale on the first scene of Lord George Gordon's actions, and in his spirit, is not calculated to remove my apprehensions. They pursue their first object with as much eagerness as ever, but with more dexterity. Under the plausible name of peace, by which they delude or are deluded, they would deliver us unarmed and defenceless to the confederation of Jacobins, whose centre is indeed in France, but whose rays proceed in every direction throughout the world. I understand that Mr. Coke, of Norfolk, has been lately very busy in spreading a disaffection to this war (which we carry on for our being) in the country in which his property gives him so great an influence. It is truly alarming to see so large a part of the aristocratic interest engaged in the cause of the new species of democracy, which is openly attacking or secretly undermining the system of property by which mankind has hitherto been governed. But we are not to delude ourselves. No man can be connected with a party which professes publicly to admire or may be justly suspected of secretly abetting this French Revolution, who must not be drawn into its vortex, and become the instrument of its designs.

What I have written is in the manner of apology. I have given it that form, as being the most respectful; but I do not stand in need of any apology for my principles, my sentiments, or my conduct. I wish the paper I lay before your Grace to be considered

as my most deliberate, solemn, and even testamentary protest against the proceedings and doctrines which have hitherto produced so much mischief in the world, and which will infallibly produce more, and possibly greater. It is my protest against the delusion by which some have been taught to look upon this Jacobin contest at home as an ordinary party squabble about place or patronage, and to regard this Jacobin war abroad as a common war about trade or territorial boundaries, or about a political balance of power among rival or jealous states. Above all, it is my protest against that mistake or perversion of sentiment by which they who agree with us in our principles may on collateral considerations be regarded as enemies, and those who, in this perilous crisis of all human affairs, differ from us fundamentally and practically, as our best friends. Thus persons of great importance may be made to turn the whole of their influence to the destruction of their principles.

I now make it my humble request to your Grace, that you will not give any sort of answer to the paper I send, or to this letter, except barely to let me know that you have received them. I even wish that at present you may not read the paper which I transmit: lock it up in the drawer of your library-table; and when a day of compulsory reflection comes, then be pleased to turn to it. Then remember that your Grace had a true friend, who had, comparatively with men of your description, a very small interest in opposing the modern system of morality and policy, but who, under every discouragement, was faithful to public duty and to private friendship. I shall then probably be dead. I am sure I do not wish

to live to see such things. But whilst I do live, I shall pursue the same course, although my merits should be taken for unpardonable faults, and as such avenged, not only on myself, but on my posterity.

Adieu, my dear Lord; and do me the justice to believe me ever, with most sincere respect, veneration, and affectionate attachment,

Your Grace's most faithful friend,

And most obedient humble servant,

EDMUND BURKE.

BEACONSFIELD, Sept. 29, 1793.

# OBSERVATIONS.

APPROACHING towards the close of a long period of public service, it is natural I should be desirous to stand well (I hope I do stand tolerably well) with that public which, with whatever fortune, I have endeavored faithfully and zealously to serve.

I am also not a little anxious for some place in the estimation of the two persons to whom I address this paper. I have always acted with them, and with those whom they represent. To my knowledge, I have not deviated, no, not in the minutest point, from their opinions and principles. Of late, without any alteration in their sentiments or in mine, a difference of a very unusual nature, and which, under the circumstances, it is not easy to describe, has arisen between us.

In my journey with them through life, I met Mr. Fox in my road; and I travelled with him very cheerfully, as long as he appeared to me to pursue the same direction with those in whose company I set out. In the latter stage of our progress a new scheme of liberty and equality was produced in the world, which either dazzled his imagination, or was suited to some new walks of ambition which were then opened to his view. The whole frame and fashion of his politics appear to have suffered about that time a very material alteration. It is about three years since, in consequence of that extraordinary change, that, after

a pretty long preceding period of distance, coolness, and want of confidence, if not total alienation on his part, a complete public separation has been made between that gentleman and me. Until lately the breach between us appeared reparable. I trusted that time and reflection, and a decisive experience of the mischiefs which have flowed from the proceedings and the system of France, on which our difference had arisen, as well as the known sentiments of the best and wisest of our common friends upon that subject, would have brought him to a safer way of thinking. Several of his friends saw no security for keeping things in a proper train after this excursion of his, but in the reunion of the party on its old grounds, under the Duke of Portland. Mr. Fox, if he pleased, might have been comprehended in that system, with the rank and consideration to which his great talents entitle him, and indeed must secure to him in any party arrangement that *could* be made. The Duke of Portland knows how much I wished for, and how earnestly I labored that reunion, and upon terms that might every way be honorable and advantageous to Mr. Fox. His conduct in the last session has extinguished these hopes forever.

Mr. Fox has lately published in print a defence of his conduct. On taking into consideration that defence, a society of gentlemen, called the Whig Club, thought proper to come to the following resolution: —"That their confidence in Mr. Fox is confirmed, strengthened, and increased by the calumnies against him."

To that resolution my two noble friends, the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, have given their concurrence.

The calumnies supposed in that resolution can be nothing else than the objections taken to Mr. Fox's conduct in this session of Parliament; for to them, and to them alone, the resolution refers. I am one of those who have publicly and strongly urged those objections. I hope I shall be thought only to do what is necessary to my justification, thus publicly, solemnly, and heavily censured by those whom I most value and esteem, when I firmly contend that the objections which I, with many others of the friends to the Duke of Portland, have made to Mr. Fox's conduct, are not *calumnies*, but founded on truth, — that they are not *few*, but many, — and that they are not *light and trivial*, but, in a very high degree, serious and important.

That I may avoid the imputation of throwing out, even privately, any loose, random imputations against the public conduct of a gentleman for whom I once entertained a very warm affection, and whose abilities I regard with the greatest admiration, I will put down, distinctly and articulately, some of the matters of objection which I feel to his late doctrines and proceedings, trusting that I shall be able to demonstrate to the friends whose good opinion I would still cultivate, that not levity, nor caprice, nor less defensible motives, but that very grave reasons, influence my judgment. I think that the spirit of his late proceedings is wholly alien to our national policy, and to the peace, to the prosperity, and to the legal liberties of this nation, *according to our ancient domestic and appropriated mode of holding them.*

Viewing things in that light, my confidence in him is not increased, but totally destroyed, by those proceedings. I cannot conceive it a matter of honor or

duty (but the direct contrary) in any member of Parliament to continue systematic opposition for the purpose of putting government under difficulties, until Mr. Fox (with all his present ideas) shall have the principal direction of affairs placed in his hands, and until the present body of administration (with their ideas and measures) is of course overturned and dissolved.

To come to particulars.

1. The laws and Constitution of the kingdom intrust the sole and exclusive right of treating with foreign potentates to the king. This is an undisputed part of the legal prerogative of the crown. However, notwithstanding this, Mr. Fox, without the knowledge or participation of any one person in the House of Commons, with whom he was bound by every party principle, in matters of delicacy and importance, confidentially to communicate, thought proper to send Mr. Adair, as his representative, and with his cipher, to St. Petersburg, there to frustrate the objects for which the minister from the crown was authorized to treat. He succeeded in this his design, and did actually frustrate the king's minister in some of the objects of his negotiation.

This proceeding of Mr. Fox does not (as I conceive) amount to absolute high treason, — Russia, though on bad terms, not having been then declaredly at war with this kingdom. But such a proceeding is in law not very remote from that offence, and is undoubtedly a most unconstitutional act, and an high treasonable misdemeanor.

The legitimate and sure mode of communication between this nation and foreign powers is rendered uncertain, precarious, and treacherous, by being di-

vided into two channels, — one with the government, one with the head of a party in opposition to that government; by which means the foreign powers can never be assured of the real authority or validity of any public transaction whatsoever.

On the other hand, the advantage taken of the discontent which at that time prevailed in Parliament and in the nation, to give to an individual an influence directly against the government of his country, in a foreign court, has made a highway into England for the intrigues of foreign courts in our affairs. This is a sore evil, — an evil from which, before this time, England was more free than any other nation. Nothing can preserve us from that evil — which connects cabinet factions abroad with popular factions here — but the keeping sacred the crown as the only channel of communication with every other nation.

This proceeding of Mr. Fox has given a strong countenance and an encouraging example to the doctrines and practices of the Revolution and Constitutional Societies, and of other mischievous societies of that description, who, without any legal authority, and even without any corporate capacity, are in the habit of proposing, and, to the best of their power, of forming, leagues and alliances with France.

This proceeding, which ought to be reprobated on all the general principles of government, is in a more narrow view of things not less reprehensible. It tends to the prejudice of the whole of the Duke of Portland's late party, by discrediting the principles upon which they supported Mr. Fox in the Russian business, as if they of that party also had proceeded in their Parliamentary opposition on the same mischievous principles which actuated Mr. Fox in sending Mr. Adair on his embassy.

2. Very soon after his sending this embassy to Russia, that is, in the spring of 1792, a covenanting club or association was formed in London, calling itself by the ambitious and invidious title of "*The Friends of the People.*" It was composed of many of Mr. Fox's own most intimate personal and party friends, joined to a very considerable part of the members of those mischievous associations called the Revolution Society and the Constitutional Society. Mr. Fox must have been well apprised of the progress of that society in every one of its steps, if not of the very origin of it. I certainly was informed of both, who had no connection with the design, directly or indirectly. His influence over the persons who composed the leading part in that association was, and is, unbounded. I hear that he expressed some disapprobation of this club in one case, (that of Mr. St. John,) where his consent was formally asked; yet he never attempted seriously to put a stop to the association, or to disavow it, or to control, check, or modify it in any way whatsoever. If he had pleased, without difficulty, he might have suppressed it in its beginning. However, he did not only not suppress it in its beginning, but encouraged it in every part of its progress, at that particular time when Jacobin clubs (under the very same or similar titles) were making such dreadful havoc in a country not thirty miles from the coast of England, and when every motive of moral prudence called for the discouragement of societies formed for the increase of popular pretensions to power and direction.

3. When the proceedings of this society of the Friends of the People, as well as others acting in the same spirit, had caused a very serious alarm in the

mind of the Duke of Portland, and of many good patriots, he publicly, in the House of Commons, treated their apprehensions and conduct with the greatest asperity and ridicule. He condemned and vilified, in the most insulting and outrageous terms, the proclamation issued by government on that occasion, — though he well knew that it had passed through the Duke of Portland's hands, that it had received his fullest approbation, and that it was the result of an actual interview between that noble Duke and Mr. Pitt. During the discussion of its merits in the House of Commons, Mr. Fox countenanced and justified the chief promoters of that association; and he received, in return, a public assurance from them of an inviolable adherence to him singly and personally. On account of this proceeding, a very great number (I presume to say not the least grave and wise part) of the Duke of Portland's friends in Parliament, and many out of Parliament who are of the same description, have become separated from that time to this from Mr. Fox's particular cabal, — very few of which cabal are, or ever have, so much as pretended to be attached to the Duke of Portland, or to pay any respect to him or his opinions.

4. At the beginning of this session, when the sober part of the nation was a second time generally and justly alarmed at the progress of the French arms on the Continent, and at the spreading of their horrid principles and cabals in England, Mr. Fox did not (as had been usual in cases of far less moment) call together any meeting of the Duke of Portland's friends in the House of Commons, for the purpose of taking their opinion on the conduct to be pursued in Parliament at that critical juncture. He concerted

his measures (if with any persons at all) with the friends of Lord Lansdowne, and those calling themselves Friends of the People, and others not in the smallest degree attached to the Duke of Portland; by which conduct he wilfully gave up (in my opinion) all pretensions to be considered as of that party, and much more to be considered as the leader and mouth of it in the House of Commons. This could not give much encouragement to those who had been separated from Mr. Fox, on account of his conduct on the first proclamation, to rejoin that party.

5. Not having consulted any of the Duke of Portland's party in the House of Commons, — and not having consulted them, because he had reason to know that the course he had resolved to pursue would be highly disagreeable to them, — he represented the alarm, which was a second time given and taken, in still more invidious colors than those in which he painted the alarms of the former year. He described those alarms in this manner, although the cause of them was then grown far less equivocal and far more urgent. He even went so far as to treat the supposition of the growth of a Jacobin spirit in England as a libel on the nation. As to the danger from *abroad*, on the first day of the session he said little or nothing upon the subject. He contented himself with defending the ruling factions in France, and with accusing the public councils of this kingdom of every sort of evil design on the liberties of the people, — declaring distinctly, strongly, and precisely, that the whole danger of the nation was from the growth of the power of the crown. The policy of this declaration was obvious. It was in subservience to the general plan of disabling us from taking any

steps against France. To counteract the alarm given by the progress of Jacobin arms and principles, he endeavored to excite an opposite alarm concerning the growth of the power of the crown. If that alarm should prevail, he knew that the nation never would be brought by arms to oppose the growth of the Jacobin empire: because it is obvious that war does, in its very nature, necessitate the Commons considerably to strengthen the hands of government; and if that strength should itself be the object of terror, we could have no war.

6. In the extraordinary and violent speeches of that day, he attributed all the evils which the public had suffered to the proclamation of the preceding summer; though he spoke in presence of the Duke of Portland's own son, the Marquis of Tichfield, who had seconded the address on that proclamation, and in presence of the Duke of Portland's brother, Lord Edward Bentinck, and several others of his best friends and nearest relations.

7. On that day, that is, on the 13th of December, 1792, he proposed an amendment to the address, which stands on the journals of the House, and which is, perhaps, the most extraordinary record which ever did stand upon them. To introduce this amendment, he not only struck out the part of the proposed address which alluded to insurrections, upon the ground of the objections which he took to the legality of calling together Parliament, (objections which I must ever think litigious and sophistical,) but he likewise struck out *that part which related to the cabals and conspiracies of the French faction in England*, although their practices and correspondences were of public notoriety. Mr. Cooper and Mr. Watt

had been deputed from Manchester to the Jacobins. These ambassadors were received by them as British representatives. Other deputations of English had been received at the bar of the National Assembly. They had gone the length of giving supplies to the Jacobin armies; and they, in return, had received promises of military assistance to forward their designs in England. A regular correspondence for fraternizing the two nations had also been carried on by societies in London with a great number of the Jacobin societies in France. This correspondence had also for its object the pretended improvement of the British Constitution. What is the most remarkable, and by much the more mischievous part of his proceedings that day, Mr. Fox likewise struck out everything in the address which *related to the tokens of ambition given by France, her aggressions upon our allies, and the sudden and dangerous growth of her power upon every side;* and instead of all those weighty, and, at that time, necessary matters, by which the House of Commons was (in a crisis such as perhaps Europe never stood) to give assurances to our allies, strength to our government, and a check to the common enemy of Europe, he substituted nothing but a criminal charge on the conduct of the British government for calling Parliament together, and an engagement to inquire into that conduct.

8. If it had pleased God to suffer him to succeed in this his project for the amendment to the address, he would forever have ruined this nation, along with the rest of Europe. At home all the Jacobin societies, formed for the utter destruction of our Constitution, would have lifted up their heads, which had been beaten down by the two proclamations. Those

societies would have been infinitely strengthened and multiplied in every quarter; their dangerous foreign communications would have been left broad and open; the crown would not have been authorized to take any measure whatever for our immediate defence by sea or land. The closest, the most natural, the nearest, and at the same time, from many internal as well as external circumstances, the weakest of our allies, Holland, would have been given up, bound hand and foot, to France, just on the point of invading that republic. A general consternation would have seized upon all Europe; and all alliance with every other power, except France, would have been forever rendered impracticable to us. I think it impossible for any man, who regards the dignity and safety of his country, or indeed the common safety of mankind, ever to forget Mr. Fox's proceedings in that tremendous crisis of all human affairs.

9. Mr. Fox very soon had reason to be apprised of the general dislike of the Duke of Portland's friends to this conduct. Some of those who had even voted with him, the day after their vote, expressed their abhorrence of his amendment, their sense of its inevitable tendency, and their total alienation from the principles and maxims upon which it was made; yet the very next day, that is, on Friday, the 14th of December, he brought on what in effect was the very same business, and on the same principles, a *second* time.

10. Although the House does not usually sit on Saturday, he a *third* time brought on another proposition in the same spirit, and pursued it with so much heat and perseverance as to sit into Sunday: a thing not known in Parliament for many years.

11. In all these motions and debates he wholly departed from all the political principles relative to France (considered merely as a state, and independent of its Jacobin form of government) which had hitherto been held fundamental in this country, and which he had himself held more strongly than any man in Parliament. He at that time studiously separated himself from those to whose sentiments he used to profess no small regard, although those sentiments were publicly declared. I had then no concern in the party, having been, for some time, with all outrage, excluded from it; but, on general principles, I must say that a person who assumes to be leader of a party composed of freemen and of gentlemen ought to pay some degree of deference to their feelings, and even to their prejudices. He ought to have some degree of management for their credit and influence in their country. He showed so very little of this delicacy, that he compared the alarm raised in the minds of the Duke of Portland's party, (which was his own,) an alarm in which they sympathized with the greater part of the nation, to the panic produced by the pretended Popish plot in the reign of Charles the Second, — describing it to be, as that was, a contrivance of knaves, and believed only by well-meaning dupes and madmen.

12. The Monday following (the 17th of December) he pursued the same conduct. The means used in England to coöperate with the Jacobin army in politics agreed with their modes of proceeding: I allude to the mischievous writings circulated with much industry and success, as well as the seditious clubs, which at that time added not a little to the

alarm taken by observing and well-informed men. The writings and the clubs were two evils which marched together. Mr. Fox discovered the greatest possible disposition to favor and countenance the one as well as the other of these two grand instruments of the French system. He would hardly consider any political writing whatsoever as a libel, or as a fit object of prosecution. At a time in which the press has been the grand instrument of the subversion of order, of morals, of religion, and, I may say, of human society itself, to carry the doctrines of its liberty higher than ever it has been known by its most extravagant assertors, even in France, gave occasion to very serious reflections. Mr. Fox treated the associations for prosecuting these libels as tending to prevent the improvement of the human mind, and as a mobbish tyranny. He thought proper to compare them with the riotous assemblies of Lord George Gordon in 1780, declaring that he had advised his friends in Westminster to sign the associations, whether they agreed to them or not, in order that they might avoid destruction to their persons or their houses, or a desertion of their shops. This insidious advice tended to confound those who wished well to the object of the association with the seditious against whom the association was directed. By this stratagem, the confederacy intended for preserving the British Constitution and the public peace would be wholly defeated. The magistrates, utterly incapable of distinguishing the friends from the enemies of order, would in vain look for support, when they stood in the greatest need of it.

13. Mr. Fox's whole conduct, on this occasion, was without example. The very morning after these

violent declamations in the House of Commons against the association, (that is, on Tuesday, the 18th,) he went himself to a meeting of St. George's parish, and there signed an association of the nature and tendency of those he had the night before so vehemently condemned: and several of his particular and most intimate friends, inhabitants of that parish, attended and signed along with him.

14. Immediately after this extraordinary step, and in order perfectly to defeat the ends of that association against Jacobin publications, (which, contrary to his opinions, he had promoted and signed,) a mischievous society was formed under his auspices, called *The Friends of the Liberty of the Press.* Their title groundlessly insinuated that the freedom of the press had lately suffered, or was now threatened with, some violation. This society was only, in reality, another modification of the society calling itself *The Friends of the People*, which in the preceding summer had caused so much uneasiness in the Duke of Portland's mind, and in the minds of several of his friends. This new society was composed of many, if not most, of the members of the club of the Friends of the People, with the addition of a vast multitude of others (such as Mr. Horne Tooke) of the worst and most seditious dispositions that could be found in the whole kingdom. In the first meeting of this club Mr. Erskine took the lead, and directly (without any disavowal ever since on Mr. Fox's part) *made use of his name and authority in favor of its formation and purposes.* In the same meeting Mr. Erskine had thanks for his defence of Paine, which amounted to a complete avowal of that Jacobin incendiary; else it is impossible to know how Mr. Erskine should have

deserved such marked applauses for acting merely as a lawyer for his fee, in the ordinary course of his profession.

15. Indeed, Mr. Fox appeared the general patron of all such persons and proceedings. When Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and other persons, for practices of the most dangerous kind, in Paris and in London, were removed from the King's Guards, Mr. Fox took occasion in the House of Commons heavily to censure that act, as unjust and oppressive, and tending to make officers bad citizens. There were few, however, who did not call for some such measures on the part of government, as of absolute necessity for the king's personal safety, as well as that of the public; and nothing but the mistaken lenity, with which such practices were rather discountenanced than punished, could possibly deserve reprehension in what was done with regard to those gentlemen.

16. Mr. Fox regularly and systematically, and with a diligence long unusual to him, did everything he could to countenance the same principle of fraternity and connection with the Jacobins abroad, and the National Convention of France, for which these officers had been removed from the Guards. For when a bill (feeble and lax, indeed, and far short of the vigor required by the conjuncture) was brought in for removing out of the kingdom the emissaries of France, Mr. Fox opposed it with all his might. He pursued a vehement and detailed opposition to it through all its stages, describing it as a measure contrary to the existing treaties between Great Britain and France, as a violation of the law of nations, and as an outrage on the Great Charter itself.

17. In the same manner, and with the same heat,

he opposed a bill which (though awkward and inartificial in its construction) was right and wise in its principle, and was precedented in the best times, and absolutely necessary at that juncture: I mean the Traitorous Correspondence Bill. By these means the enemy, rendered infinitely dangerous by the links of real faction and pretended commerce, would have been (had Mr. Fox succeeded) enabled to carry on the war against us by our own resources. For this purpose that enemy would have had his agents and traitors in the midst of us.

18. When at length war was actually declared by the usurpers in France against this kingdom, and declared whilst they were pretending a negotiation through Dumouriez with Lord Auckland, Mr. Fox still continued, through the whole of the proceedings, to discredit the national honor and justice, and to throw the entire blame of the war on Parliament, and on his own country, as acting with violence, haughtiness, and want of equity. He frequently asserted, both at the time and ever since, that the war, though declared by France, was provoked by us, and that it was wholly unnecessary and fundamentally unjust.

19. He has lost no opportunity of railing, in the most virulent manner and in the most unmeasured language, at every foreign power with whom we could now, or at any time, contract any useful or effectual alliance against France, — declaring that he hoped no alliance with those powers was made, or was in a train of being made.* He always expressed himself with the utmost horror concerning such alli-

* It is an exeeption, that in one of his last speeches (but not before) Mr. Fox seemed to think an alliance with Spain might be proper.

ances. So did all his phalanx. Mr. Sheridan in particular, after one of his invectives against those powers, sitting by him, said, with manifest marks of his approbation, that, if we must go to war, he had rather go to war alone than with such allies.

20. Immediately after the French declaration of war against us, Parliament addressed the king in support of the war against them, as just and necessary, and provoked, as well as formally declared against Great Britain. He did not divide the House upon this measure; yet he immediately followed this our solemn Parliamentary engagement to the king with a motion proposing a set of resolutions, the effect of which was, that the two Houses were to load themselves with every kind of reproach for having made the address which they had just carried to the throne. He commenced this long string of criminatory resolutions against his country (if King, Lords, and Commons of Great Britain, and a decided majority without doors are his country) *with a declaration against intermeddling in the interior concerns of France.* The purport of this resolution of non-interference is a thing unexampled in the history of the world, when one nation has been actually at war with another. The best writers on the law of nations give no sort of countenance to his doctrine of non-interference, in the extent and manner in which he used it, *even when there is no war.* When the war exists, not one authority is against it in all its latitude. His doctrine is equally contrary to the enemy's uniform practice, who, whether in peace or in war, makes it his great aim not only to change the government, but to make an entire revolution in the whole of the social order in every country.

The object of the last of this extraordinary string of resolutions moved by Mr. Fox was to advise the crown not to enter into such an engagement with any foreign power so as to hinder us from making a *separate* peace with France, or which might tend to enable any of those powers to introduce a government in that country other than such as those persons whom he calls the people of France shall choose to establish. In short, the whole of these resolutions appeared to have but one drift, namely, the sacrifice of our own domestic dignity and safety, and the independency of Europe, to the support of this strange mixture of anarchy and tyranny which prevails in France, and which Mr. Fox and his party were pleased to call a government. The immediate consequence of these measures was (by an example the ill effects of which on the whole world are not to be calculated) to secure the robbers of the innocent nobility, gentry, and ecclesiastics of France in the enjoyment of the spoil they have made of the estates, houses, and goods of their fellow-citizens.

21. Not satisfied with moving these resolutions, tending to confirm this horrible tyranny and robbery, and with actually dividing the House on the first of the long string which they composed, in a few days afterwards he encouraged and supported Mr. Grey in producing the very same string in a new form, and in moving, under the shape of an address of Parliament to the crown, another virulent libel on all its own proceedings in this session, in which not only all the ground of the resolutions was again travelled over, but much new inflammatory matter was introduced. In particular, a charge was made, that Great Britain had not in-

terposed to prevent the last partition of Poland. On this head the party dwelt very largely and very vehemently. Mr. Fox's intention, in the choice of this extraordinary topic, was evident enough. He well knows two things: first, that no wise or honest man can approve of that partition, or can contemplate it without prognosticating great mischief from it to all countries at some future time; secondly, he knows quite as well, that, let our opinions on that partition be what they will, England, by itself, is not in a situation to afford to Poland any assistance whatsoever. The purpose of the introduction of Polish politics into this discussion was not for the sake of Poland; it was to throw an odium upon those who are obliged to decline the cause of justice from their impossibility of supporting a cause which they approve: as if we, who think more strongly on this subject than he does, were of a party against Poland, because we are obliged to act with some of the authors of that injustice against our common enemy, France. But the great and leading purpose of this introduction of Poland into the debates on the French war was to divert the public attention from what was in our power, that is, from a steady coöperation against France, to a quarrel with the allies for the sake of a Polish war, which, for any useful purpose to Poland, he knew it was out of our power to make. If England can touch Poland ever so remotely, it must be through the medium of alliances. But by attacking all the combined powers together for their supposed unjust aggression upon France, he bound them by a new common interest not separately to join England for the rescue of Poland. The proposition could only mean to do what all the writers

of his party in the Morning Chronicle have aimed at persuading the public to, through the whole of the last autumn and winter, and to this hour: that is, to an alliance with the Jacobins of France, for the pretended purpose of succoring Poland. This curious project would leave to Great Britain no other ally in all Europe except its old enemy, France.

22. Mr. Fox, after the first day's discussion on the question for the address, was at length driven to admit (to admit rather than to urge, and that very faintly) that France had discovered ambitious views, which none of his partisans, that I recollect, (Mr. Sheridan excepted,) did, however, either urge or admit. What is remarkable enough, all the points admitted against the Jacobins were brought to bear in their favor as much as those in which they were defended. For when Mr. Fox admitted that the conduct of the Jacobins did discover ambition, he always ended his admission of their ambitious views by an apology for them, insisting that the universally hostile disposition shown to them rendered their ambition a sort of defensive policy. Thus, on whatever roads he travelled, they all terminated in recommending a recognition of their pretended republic, and in the plan of sending an ambassador to it. This was the burden of all his song:—"Everything which we could reasonably hope from war would be obtained from treaty." It is to be observed, however, that, in all these debates, Mr. Fox never once stated to the House upon what ground it was he conceived that all the objects of the French system of united fanaticism and ambition would instantly be given up, whenever England should think fit to propose a treaty. On proposing so strange a recogni-

tion and so humiliating an embassy as he moved, he was bound to produce his authority, if any authority he had. He ought to have done this the rather, because Le Brun, in his first propositions, and in his answers to Lord Grenville, defended, *on principle*, *not on temporary convenience*, everything which was objected to France, and showed not the smallest disposition to give up any one of the points in discussion. Mr. Fox must also have known that the Convention had passed to the order of the day, on a proposition to give some sort of explanation or modification to the hostile decree of the 19th of November for exciting insurrections in all countries, — a decree known to be peculiarly pointed at Great Britain. The whole proceeding of the French administration was the most remote that could be imagined from furnishing any indication of a pacific disposition: for at the very time in which it was pretended that the Jacobins entertained those boasted pacific intentions, at the very time in which Mr. Fox was urging a treaty with them, not content with refusing a modification of the decree for insurrections, they published their ever-memorable decree of the 15th of December, 1792, for disorganizing every country in Europe into which they should on any occasion set their foot; and on the 25th and the 30th of the same month, they solemnly, and, on the last of these days, practically, confirmed that decree.

23. But Mr. Fox had himself taken good care, in the negotiation he proposed, that France should not be obliged to make any very great concessions to her presumed moderation: for he had laid down one general, comprehensive rule, with him (as he said) constant and inviolable. This rule, in fact,

would not only have left to the faction in France all the property and power they had usurped at home, but most, if not all, of the conquests which by their atrocious perfidy and violence they had made abroad. The principle laid down by Mr. Fox is this,—"*That every state, in the conclusion of a war, has a right to avail itself of its conquests towards an indemnification.*" This principle (true or false) is totally contrary to the policy which this country has pursued with France at various periods, particularly at the Treaty of Ryswick, in the last century, and at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in this. Whatever the merits of his rule may be in the eyes of neutral judges, it is a rule which no statesman before him ever laid down in favor of the adverse power with whom he was to negotiate. The adverse party himself may safely be trusted to take care of his *own* aggrandizement. But (as if the black boxes of the several parties had been exchanged) Mr. Fox's English ambassador, by some odd mistake, would find himself charged with the concerns of France. If we were to leave France as she stood at the time when Mr. Fox proposed to treat with her, that formidable power must have been infinitely strengthened, and almost every other power in Europe as much weakened, by the extraordinary basis which he laid for a treaty. For Avignon must go from the Pope; Savoy (at least) from the King of Sardinia, if not Nice. Liege, Mentz, Salm, Deux-Ponts, and Basle must be separated from Germany. On this side of the Rhine, Liege (at least) must be lost to the Empire, and added to France. Mr. Fox's general principle fully covered all this. How much of these territories came within his rule he never attempted

to define. He kept a profound silence as to Germany. As to the Netherlands he was something more explicit. He said (if I recollect right) that France on that side might expect something towards strengthening her frontier. As to the remaining parts of the Netherlands, which he supposed France might consent to surrender, he went so far as to declare that England ought not to permit the Emperor to be repossessed of the remainder of the ten Provinces, but that *the people* should choose such a form of independent government as they liked. This proposition of Mr. Fox was just the arrangement which the usurpation in France had all along proposed to make. As the circumstances were at that time, and have been ever since, his proposition fully indicated what government the Flemings *must* have in the stated extent of what was left to them. A government so set up in the Netherlands, whether compulsory, or by the choice of the *sans-culottes*, (who he well knew were to be the real electors, and the sole electors,) in whatever name it was to exist, must evidently depend for its existence, as it had done for its original formation, on France. In reality, it must have ended in that point to which, piece by piece, the French were then actually bringing all the Netherlands, — that is, an incorporation with France as a body of new Departments, just as Savoy and Liege and the rest of their pretended independent popular sovereignties have been united to their republic. Such an arrangement must have destroyed Austria; it must have left Holland always at the mercy of France; it must totally and forever cut off all political communication between England and the Continent. Such must have been the situation of Europe,

according to Mr. Fox's system of politics, however laudable his personal motives may have been in proposing so complete a change in the whole system of Great Britain with regard to all the Continental powers.

24. After it had been generally supposed that all public business was over for the session, and that Mr. Fox had exhausted all the modes of pressing this French scheme, he thought proper to take a step beyond every expectation, and which demonstrated his wonderful eagerness and perseverance in his cause, as well as the nature and true character of the cause itself. This step was taken by Mr. Fox immediately after his giving his assent to the grant of supply voted to him by Mr. Serjeant Adair and a committee of gentlemen who assumed to themselves to act in the name of the public. In the instrument of his acceptance of this grant, Mr. Fox took occasion to assure them that he would always persevere *in the same conduct* which had procured to him so honorable a mark of the public approbation. He was as good as his word.

25. It was not long before an opportunity was found, or made, for proving the sincerity of his professions, and demonstrating his gratitude to those who had given public and unequivocal marks of their approbation of his late conduct. One of the most virulent of the Jacobin faction, Mr. Gurney, a banker at Norwich, had all along distinguished himself by his French politics. By the means of this gentleman, and of his associates of the same description, one of the most insidious and dangerous handbills that ever was seen had been circulated at Norwich against the war, drawn up in an hypocritical tone

of compassion for the poor. This address to the populace of Norwich was to play in concert with an address to Mr. Fox; it was signed by Mr. Gurney and the higher part of the French fraternity in that town. In this paper Mr. Fox is applauded for his conduct throughout the session, and requested, before the prorogation, to make a motion for an immediate peace with France.

26. Mr. Fox did not revoke to this suit: he readily and thankfully undertook the task assigned to him. Not content, however, with merely falling in with their wishes, he proposed a task on his part to the gentlemen of Norwich, which was, *that they should move the people without doors to petition against the war*. He said, that, without such assistance, little good could be expected from anything he might attempt within the walls of the House of Commons. In the mean time, to animate his Norwich friends in their endeavors to besiege Parliament, he snatched the first opportunity to give notice of a motion which he very soon after made, namely, to address the crown to make peace with France. The address was so worded as to coöperate with the handbill in bringing forward matter calculated to inflame the manufacturers throughout the kingdom.

27. In support of his motion, he declaimed in the most virulent strain, even beyond any of his former invectives, against every power with whom we were then, and are now, acting against France. In the *moral* forum some of these powers certainly deserve all the ill he said of them; but the *political* effect aimed at, evidently, was to turn our indignation from France, with whom we were at war, upon Russia, or Prussia, or Austria, or Sardinia, or all of them to-

gether. In consequence of his knowledge that we *could* not effectually do *without* them, and his resolution that we *should* not act *with* them, he proposed, that, having, as he asserted, "obtained the only avowed object of the war (the evacuation of Holland) we ought to conclude an instant peace."

28. Mr. Fox could not be ignorant of the mistaken basis upon which his motion was grounded. He was not ignorant, that, though the attempt of Dumouriez on Holland, (so very near succeeding,) and the navigation of the Scheldt, (a part of the same piece,) were among the *immediate* causes, they were by no means the only causes, alleged for Parliament's taking that offence at the proceedings of France, for which the Jacobins were so prompt in declaring war upon this kingdom. Other full as weighty causes had been alleged: they were,—1. The general overbearing and desperate ambition of that faction; 2. Their actual attacks on every nation in Europe; 3. Their usurpation of territories in the Empire with the governments of which they had no pretence of quarrel; 4. Their perpetual and irrevocable consolidation with their own dominions of every territory of the Netherlands, of Germany, and of Italy, of which they got a temporary possession; 5. The mischiefs attending the prevalence of their system, which would make the success of their ambitious designs a new and peculiar species of calamity in the world; 6. Their formal, public decrees, particularly those of the 19th of November and 15th and 25th of December; 7. Their notorious attempts to undermine the Constitution of this country; 8. Their public reception of deputations of traitors for that direct purpose; 9. Their murder of their sovereign, declared by most

of the members of the Convention, who spoke with their vote, (without a disavowal from any,) to be perpetrated as an example to *all* kings and a precedent for *all* subjects to follow. All these, and not the Scheldt alone, or the invasion of Holland, were urged by the minister, and by Mr. Windham, by myself, and by others who spoke in those debates, as causes for bringing France to a sense of her wrong in the war which she declared against us. Mr. Fox well knew that not one man argued for the necessity of a vigorous resistance to France, who did not state the war as being for the very existence of the social order here, and in every part of Europe, — who did not state his opinion that this war was not at all a foreign war of empire, but as much for our liberties, properties, laws, and religion, and even more so, than any we had ever been engaged in. This was the war which, according to Mr. Fox and Mr. Gurney, we were to abandon before the enemy had felt in the slightest degree the impression of our arms.

29. Had Mr. Fox's disgraceful proposal been complied with, this kingdom would have been stained with a blot of perfidy hitherto without an example in our history, and with far less excuse than any act of perfidy which we find in the history of any other nation. The moment when, by the incredible exertions of Austria, (very little through ours,) the temporary deliverance of Holland (in effect our own deliverance) had been achieved, he advised the House instantly to abandon her to that very enemy from whose arms she had freed ourselves and the closest of our allies.

30. But we are not to be imposed on by forms of language. We must act on the substance of things. To abandon Austria in this manner was to abandon

Holland itself. For suppose France, encouraged and strengthened as she must have been by our treacherous desertion, — suppose France, I say, to succeed against Austria, (as she had succeeded the very year before,) England would, after its disarmament, have nothing in the world but the inviolable faith of Jacobinism and the steady politics of anarchy to depend upon, against France's renewing the very same attempts upon Holland, and renewing them (considering what Holland was and is) with much better prospects of success. Mr. Fox must have been well aware, that, if we were to break with the greater Continental powers, and particularly to come to a rupture with them, in the violent and intemperate mode in which he would have made the breach, the defence of Holland against a foreign enemy and a strong domestic faction must hereafter rest solely upon England, without the chance of a single ally, either on that or on any other occasion. So far as to the pretended sole object of the war, which Mr. Fox supposed to be so completely obtained (but which then was not at all, and at this day is not completely obtained) as to leave us nothing else to do than to cultivate a peaceful, quiet correspondence with those quiet, peaceable, and moderate people, the Jacobins of France.

31. To induce us to this, Mr. Fox labored hard to make it appear that the powers with whom we acted were full as ambitious and as perfidious as the French. This might be true as to *other* nations. They had not, however, been so to *us* or to Holland. He produced no proof of active ambition and ill faith against Austria. But supposing the combined powers had been all thus faithless, and been all alike so, there was one

circumstance which made an essential difference between them and France. I need not, therefore, be at the trouble of contesting this point, — which, however, in this latitude, and as at all affecting Great Britain and Holland, I deny utterly. Be it so. But the great monarchies have it in their power to keep their faith, *if they please*, because they are governments of established and recognized authority at home and abroad. France had, in reality, no government. The very factions who exercised power had no stability. The French Convention had no powers of peace or war. Supposing the Convention to be free, (most assuredly it was not,) they had shown no disposition to abandon their projects. Though long driven out of Liege, it was not many days before Mr. Fox's motion that they still continued to claim it as a country which their principles of fraternity bound them to protect, — that is, to subdue and to regulate at their pleasure. That party which Mr. Fox inclined most to favor and trust, and from which he must have received his assurances, (if any he did receive,) that is, the *Brissotins*, were then either prisoners or fugitives. The party which prevailed over them (that of Danton and Marat) was itself in a tottering condition, and was disowned by a very great part of France. To say nothing of the royal party, who were powerful and growing, and who had full as good a right to claim to be the legitimate government as any of the Parisian factions with whom he proposed to treat, — or rather, (as it seemed to me,) to surrender at discretion.

32. But when Mr. Fox began to come from his general hopes of the moderation of the Jacobins to particulars, he put the case that they might not perhaps be willing to surrender Savoy. He certainly

was not willing to contest that point with them, but plainly and explicitly (as I understood him) proposed to let them keep it, — though he knew (or he was much worse informed than he would be thought) that England had at the very time agreed on the terms of a treaty with the King of Sardinia, of which the recovery of Savoy was the *casus fœderis*. In the teeth of this treaty, Mr. Fox proposed a direct and most scandalous breach of our faith, formally and recently given. But to surrender Savoy was to surrender a great deal more than so many square acres of land or so much revenue. In its consequences, the surrender of Savoy was to make a surrender to France of Switzerland and Italy, of both which countries Savoy is the key, — as it is known to ordinary speculators in politics, though it may not be known to the weavers in Norwich, who, it seems, are by Mr. Fox called to be the judges in this matter.

A sure way, indeed, to encourage France not to make a surrender of this key of Italy and Switzerland, or of Mentz, the key of Germany, or of any other object whatsoever which she holds, is to let her see *that the people of England raise a clamor against the war before terms are so much as proposed on any side.* From that moment the Jacobins would be masters of the terms. They would know that Parliament, at all hazards, would force the king to a separate peace. The crown could not, in that case, have any use of its judgment. Parliament could not possess more judgment than the crown, when besieged (as Mr. Fox proposed to Mr. Gurney) by the cries of the manufacturers. This description of men Mr. Fox endeavored in his speech by every method to irritate and inflame. In effect, his two

speeches were, through the whole, nothing more than an amplification of the Norwich handbill. He rested the greatest part of his argument on the distress of trade, which he attributed to the war; though it was obvious to any tolerably good observation, and, much more, must have been clear to such an observation as his, that the then difficulties of the trade and manufacture could have no sort of connection with our share in it. The war had hardly begun. We had suffered neither by spoil, nor by defeat, nor by disgrace of any kind. Public credit was so little impaired, that, instead of being supported by any extraordinary aids from individuals, it advanced a credit to individuals to the amount of five millions for the support of trade and manufactures under their temporary difficulties, a thing before never heard of, — a thing of which I do not commend the policy, but only state it, to show that Mr. Fox's ideas of the effects of war were without any trace of foundation.

33. It is impossible not to connect the arguments and proceedings of a party with that of its leader, — especially when not disavowed or controlled by him. Mr. Fox's partisans declaim against all the powers of Europe, except the Jacobins, just as he does; but not having the same reasons for management and caution which he has, they speak out. He satisfies himself merely with making his invectives, and leaves others to draw the conclusion. But they produce their Polish interposition for the express purpose of leading to a French alliance. They urge their French peace in order to make a junction with the Jacobins to oppose the powers, whom, in their language, they call despots, and their leagues, a com-

bination of despots. Indeed, no man can look on the present posture of Europe with the least degree of discernment, who will not be thoroughly convinced that England must be the fast friend or the determined enemy of France. There is no medium; and I do not think Mr. Fox to be so dull as not to observe this. His peace would have involved us instantly in the most extensive and most ruinous wars, at the same time that it would have made a broad highway (across which no human wisdom could put an effectual barrier) for a mutual intercourse with the fraternizing Jacobins on both sides, the consequences of which those will certainly not provide against who do not dread or dislike them.

34. It is not amiss in this place to enter a little more fully into the spirit of the principal arguments on which Mr. Fox thought proper to rest this his grand and concluding motion, particularly such as were drawn from the internal state of our affairs. Under a specious appearance, (not uncommonly put on by men of unscrupulous ambition,) that of tenderness and compassion to the poor, he did his best to appeal to the judgments of the meanest and most ignorant of the people on the merits of the war. He had before done something of the same dangerous kind in his printed letter. The ground of a political war is of all things that which the poor laborer and manufacturer are the least capable of conceiving. This sort of people know in general that they must suffer by war. It is a matter to which they are sufficiently competent, because it is a matter of feeling. The *causes* of a war are not matters of feeling, but of reason and foresight, and often of remote considerations, and of a very great combination of circumstan-

ces which *they* are utterly incapable of comprehending: and, indeed, it is not every man in the highest classes who is altogether equal to it. Nothing, in a general sense, appears to me less fair and justifiable (even if no attempt were made to inflame the passions) than to submit a matter on discussion to a tribunal incapable of judging of more than *one side* of the question. It is at least as unjustifiable to inflame the passions of such judges against *that side* in favor of which they cannot so much as comprehend the arguments. Before the prevalence of the French system, (which, as far as it has gone, has extinguished the salutary prejudice called our country,) nobody was more sensible of this important truth than Mr. Fox; and nothing was more proper and pertinent, or was more felt at the time, than his reprimand to Mr. Wilberforce for an inconsiderate expression which tended to call in the judgment of the poor to estimate the policy of war upon the standard of the taxes they may be obliged to pay towards its support.

35. It is fatally known that the great object of the Jacobin system is, to excite the lowest description of the people to range themselves under ambitious men for the pillage and destruction of the more eminent orders and classes of the community. The thing, therefore, that a man not fanatically attached to that dreadful project would most studiously avoid is, to act a part with the French *Propagandists*, in attributing (as they constantly do) all wars, and all the consequences of wars, to the pride of those orders, and to their contempt of the weak and indigent part of the society. The ruling Jacobins insist upon it, that even the wars which they carry on with so much obstinacy against all nations are made to prevent the

poor from any longer being the instruments and victims of kings, nobles, and the aristocracy of burghers and rich men. They pretend that the destruction of kings, nobles, and the aristocracy of burghers and rich men is the only means of establishing an universal and perpetual peace. This is the great drift of all their writings, from the time of the meeting of the states of France, in 1789, to the publication of the last Morning Chronicle. They insist that even the war which with so much boldness they have declared against all nations is to prevent the poor from becoming the instruments and victims of these persons and descriptions. It is but too easy, if you once teach poor laborers and mechanics to defy their prejudices, and, as this has been done with an industry scarcely credible, to substitute the principles of fraternity in the room of that salutary prejudice called our country, — it is, I say, but too easy to persuade them, agreeably to what Mr. Fox hints in his public letter, that this war is, and that the other wars have been, the wars of kings; it is easy to persuade them that the terrors even of a foreign conquest are not terrors for *them;* it is easy to persuade them, that, for their part, *they* have nothing to lose, — and that their condition is not likely to be altered for the worse, whatever party may happen to prevail in the war. Under any circumstances this doctrine is highly dangerous, as it tends to make separate parties of the higher and lower orders, and to put their interests on a different bottom. But if the enemy you have to deal with should appear, as France now appears, under the very name and title of the deliverer of the poor and the chastiser of the rich, the former class would

readily become not an indifferent spectator of the war, but would be ready to enlist in the faction of the enemy, — which they would consider, though under a foreign name, to be more connected with them than an adverse description in the same land. All the props of society would be drawn from us by these doctrines, and the very foundations of the public defence would give way in an instant.

36. There is no point which the faction of fraternity in England have labored more than to excite in the poor the horror of any war with France upon any occasion. When they found that their open attacks upon our Constitution in favor of a French republic were for the present repelled, they put that matter out of sight, and have taken up the more plausible and popular ground of general peace, upon merely general principles; although these very men, in the correspondence of their clubs with those of France, had reprobated the neutrality which now they so earnestly press. But, in reality, their maxim was, and is, "Peace and alliance with France, and war with the rest of the world."

37. This last motion of Mr. Fox bound up the whole of his politics during the session. This motion had many circumstances, particularly in the Norwich correspondence, by which the mischief of all the others was aggravated beyond measure. Yet this last motion, far the worst of Mr. Fox's proceedings, was the best supported of any of them, except his amendment to the address. The Duke of Portland had directly engaged to support the war; — here was a motion as directly made to force the crown to put an end to it before a blow had been struck. The efforts of the faction have so prevailed

that some of his Grace's nearest friends have actually voted for that motion; some, after showing themselves, went away; others did not appear at all. So it must be, where a man is for any time supported from personal considerations, without reference to his public conduct. Through the whole of this business, the spirit of fraternity appears to me to have been the governing principle. It might be shameful for any man, above the vulgar, to show so blind a partiality even to his own country as Mr. Fox appears, on all occasions, this session, to have shown to France. Had Mr. Fox been a minister, and proceeded on the principles laid down by him, I believe there is little doubt he would have been considered as the most criminal statesman that ever lived in this country. I do not know why a statesman out of place is not to be judged in the same manner, unless we can excuse him by pleading in his favor a total indifference to principle, and that he would act and think in quite a different way, if he were in office. This I will not suppose. One may think better of him, and that, in case of his power, he might change his mind. But supposing, that, from better or from worse motives, he might change his mind on his acquisition of the favor of the crown, I seriously fear, that, if the king should to-morrow put power into his hands, and that his good genius would inspire him with maxims very different from those he has promulgated, he would not be able to get the better of the ill temper and the ill doctrines he has been the means of exciting and propagating throughout the kingdom. From the very beginning of their inhuman and unprovoked rebellion and tyrannic usurpation, he has covered

the predominant faction in France, and their adherents here, with the most exaggerated panegyrics; neither has he missed a single opportunity of abusing and vilifying those who, in uniform concurrence with the Duke of Portland's and Lord Fitzwilliam's opinion, have maintained the true grounds of the Revolution Settlement in 1688. He lamented all the defeats of the French; he rejoiced in all their victories, — even when these victories threatened to overwhelm the continent of Europe, and, by facilitating their means of penetrating into Holland, to bring this most dreadful of all evils with irresistible force to the very doors, if not into the very heart, of our country. To this hour he always speaks of every thought of overturning the French Jacobinism by force, on the part of any power whatsoever, as an attempt unjust and cruel, and which he reprobates with horror. If any of the French Jacobin leaders are spoken of with hatred or scorn, he falls upon those who take that liberty with all the zeal and warmth with which men of honor defend their particular and bosom friends, when attacked. He always represents their cause as a cause of liberty, and all who oppose it as partisans of despotism. He obstinately continues to consider the great and growing vices, crimes, and disorders of that country as only evils of passage, which are to produce a permanently happy state of order and freedom. He represents these disorders exactly in the same way and with the same limitations which are used by one of the two great Jacobin factions: I mean that of Pétion and Brissot. Like them, he studiously confines his horror and reprobation only to the massacres of the 2d of September, and passes by those of the

10th of August, as well as the imprisonment and deposition of the king, which were the consequences of that day, as indeed were the massacres themselves to which he confines his censure, though they were not actually perpetrated till early in September. Like that faction, he condemns, not the deposition, or the proposed exile or perpetual imprisonment, but only the murder of the king. Mr. Sheridan, on every occasion, palliates all their massacres committed in every part of France, as the effects of a natural indignation at the exorbitances of despotism, and of the dread of the people of returning under that yoke. He has thus taken occasion to load, not the actors in this wickedness, but the government of a mild, merciful, beneficent, and patriotic prince, and his suffering, faithful subjects, with all the crimes of the new anarchical tyranny under which the one has been murdered and the others are oppressed. Those continual either praises or palliating apologies of everything done in France, and those invectives as uniformly vomited out upon all those who venture to express their disapprobation of such proceedings, coming from a man of Mr. Fox's fame and authority, and one who is considered as the person to whom a great party of the wealthiest men of the kingdom look up, have been the cause why the principle of French fraternity formerly gained the ground which at one time it had obtained in this country. It will infallibly recover itself again, and in ten times a greater degree, if the kind of peace, in the manner which he preaches, ever shall be established with the reigning faction in France.

38. So far as to the French practices with regard to France and the other powers of Europe. As to

their principles and doctrines with regard to the constitution of states, Mr. Fox studiously, on all occasions, and indeed when no occasion calls for it, (as on the debate of the petition for reform,) brings forward and asserts their fundamental and fatal principle, pregnant with every mischief and every crime, namely, that "in every country the people is the legitimate sovereign": exactly conformable to the declaration of the French clubs and legislators: — "La souveraineté est *une*, *indivisible*, *inalienable*, *et imprescriptible;* elle appartient à la nation; aucune *section* du peuple ni aucun *individu* ne peut s'en attribuer l'exercise." This confounds, in a manner equally mischievous and stupid, the origin of a government from the people with its continuance in their hands. I believe that no such doctrine has ever been heard of in any public act of any government whatsoever, until it was adopted (I think from the writings of Rousseau) by the French Assemblies, who have made it the basis of their Constitution at home, and of the matter of their apostolate in every country. These and other wild declarations of abstract principle, Mr. Fox says, are in themselves perfectly right and true; though in some cases he allows the French draw absurd consequences from them. But I conceive he is mistaken. The consequences are most logically, though most mischievously, drawn from the premises and principles by that wicked and ungracious faction. The fault is in the foundation.

39. Before society, in a multitude of men, it is obvious that sovereignty and subjection are ideas which cannot exist. It is the compact on which society is formed that makes both. But to suppose the people,

contrary to their compacts, both to give away and retain the same thing is altogether absurd. It is worse, for it supposes in any strong combination of men a power and right of always dissolving the social union; which power, however, if it exists, renders them again as little sovereigns as subjects, but a mere unconnected multitude. It is not easy to state for what good end, at a time like this, when the foundations of all ancient and prescriptive governments, such as ours, (to which people submit, not because they have chosen them, but because they are born to them,) are undermined by perilous theories, that Mr. Fox should be so fond of referring to those theories, upon all occasions, even though speculatively they might be true, — which God forbid they should! Particularly I do not see the reason why he should be so fond of declaring that the principles of the Revolution have made the crown of Great Britain *elective*, — why he thinks it seasonable to preach up with so much earnestness, for now three years together, the doctrine of resistance and revolution at all, — or to assert that our last Revolution, of 1688, stands on the same or similar principles with that of France. We are not called upon to bring forward these doctrines, which are hardly ever resorted to but in cases of extremity, and where they are followed by correspondent actions. We are not called upon by any circumstance, that I know of, which can justify a revolt, or which demands a revolution, or can make an election of a successor to the crown necessary, whatever latent right may be supposed to exist for effectuating any of these purposes.

40. Not the least alarming of the proceedings of Mr. Fox and his friends in this session, especially

taken in concurrence with their whole proceedings with regard to France and its principles, is their eagerness at this season, under pretence of Parliamentary reforms, (a project which had been for some time rather dormant,) to discredit and disgrace the House of Commons. For this purpose these gentlemen had found a way to insult the House by several atrocious libels in the form of petitions. In particular they brought up a libel, or rather a complete digest of libellous matter, from the club called the Friends of the People. It is, indeed, at once the most audacious and the most insidious of all the performances of that kind which have yet appeared. It is said to be the penmanship of Mr. Tierney, to bring whom into Parliament the Duke of Portland formerly had taken a good deal of pains, and expended, as I hear, a considerable sum of money.

41. Among the circumstances of danger from that piece, and from its precedent, it is observable that this is the first petition (if I remember right) *coming from a club or association, signed by individuals, denoting neither local residence nor corporate capacity.* This mode of petition, not being strictly illegal or informal, though in its spirit in the highest degree mischievous, may and will lead to other things of that nature, tending to bring these clubs and associations to the French model, and to make them in the end answer French purposes: I mean, that, without legal names, these clubs will be led to assume political capacities; that they may debate the forms of Constitution; and that from their meetings they may insolently dictate their will to the regular authorities of the kingdom, in the manner in which the Jacobin clubs issue their mandates to the National Assembly or the National

Convention. The audacious remonstrance, I observe, is signed by all of that association (the Friends of the People) *who are not in Parliament*, and it was supported most strenuously by all the associators *who are members*, with Mr. Fox at their head. He and they contended for referring this libel to a committee. Upon the question of that reference they grounded all their debate for a change in the constitution of Parliament. The pretended petition is, in fact, a regular charge or impeachment of the House of Commons, digested into a number of articles. This plan of reform is not a criminal impeachment, but a matter of prudence, to be submitted to the public wisdom, which must be as well apprised of the facts as petitioners can be. But those accusers of the House of Commons have proceeded upon the principles of a criminal process, and have had the effrontery to offer proof on each article.

42. This charge the party of Mr. Fox maintained article by article, beginning with the first, — namely, the interference of peers at elections, and their nominating in effect several of the members of the House of Commons. In the printed list of grievances which they made out on the occasion, and in support of their charge, is found the borough for which, under Lord Fitzwilliam's influence, I now sit. By this remonstrance, and its object, they hope to defeat the operation of property in elections, and in reality to dissolve the connection and communication of interests which makes the Houses of Parliament a mutual support to each other. Mr. Fox and the Friends of the People are not so ignorant as not to know that peers do not interfere in elections as peers, but as men of property; they well know that the House

of Lords is by itself the feeblest part of the Constitution; they know that the House of Lords is supported only by its connections with the crown and with the House of Commons, and that without this double connection the Lords could not exist a single year. They know that all these parts of our Constitution, whilst they are balanced as opposing interests, are also connected as friends; otherwise nothing but confusion could be the result of such a complex Constitution. It is natural, therefore, that they who wish the common destruction of the whole and of all its parts should contend for their total separation. But as the House of Commons is that link which connects both the other parts of the Constitution (the Crown and the Lords) *with the mass of the people*, it is to that link (as it is natural enough) that their incessant attacks are directed. That artificial representation of the people being once discredited and overturned, all goes to pieces, and nothing but a plain *French* democracy or arbitrary monarchy can possibly exist.

43. Some of these gentlemen who have attacked the House of Commons lean to a representation of the people by the head, — that is, to *individual representation*. None of them, that I recollect, except Mr. Fox, directly rejected it. It is remarkable, however, that he only rejected it by simply declaring an opinion. He let all the argument go against his opinion. All the proceedings and arguments of his reforming friends lead to individual representation, and to nothing else. It deserves to be attentively observed, *that this individual representation is the only plan of their reform which has been explicitly proposed.* In the mean time, the conduct

of Mr. Fox appears to be far more inexplicable, on any good ground, than theirs, who propose the individual representation; for he neither proposes anything, nor even suggests that he has anything to propose, in lieu of the present mode of constituting the House of Commons; on the contrary, he declares against all the plans which have yet been suggested, either from himself or others: yet, thus unprovided with any plan whatsoever, he pressed forward this unknown reform with all possible warmth; and for that purpose, in a speech of several hours, he urged the referring to a committee the libellous impeachment of the House of Commons by the association of the Friends of the People. But for Mr. Fox to discredit Parliament *as it stands*, to countenance leagues, covenants, and associations for its further discredit, to render it perfectly odious and contemptible, and at the same time to propose nothing at all in place of what he disgraces, is worse, if possible, than to contend for personal individual representation, and is little less than demanding, in plain terms, to bring on plain anarchy.

44. Mr. Fox and these gentlemen have for the present been defeated; but they are neither converted nor disheartened. They have solemnly declared that they will persevere until they shall have obtained their ends, — persisting to assert that the House of Commons not only is not the true representative of the people, but that it does not answer the purpose of such representation: most of them insist that all the debts, the taxes, and the burdens of all kinds on the people, with every other evil and inconvenience which we have suffered since the Revolution, have been owing solely to an House of

Commons which does not speak the sense of the people.

45. It is also not to be forgotten, that Mr. Fox, and all who hold with him, on this, as on all other occasions of pretended reform, most bitterly reproach Mr. Pitt with treachery, in declining to support the scandalous charges and indefinite projects of this infamous libel from the Friends of the People. By the animosity with which they persecute all those who grow cold in this cause of pretended reform, they hope, that, if, through levity, inexperience, or ambition, any young person (like Mr. Pitt, for instance) happens to be once embarked in their design, they shall by a false shame keep him fast in it forever. Many they have so hampered.

46. I know it is usual, when the peril and alarm of the hour appears to be a little overblown, to think no more of the matter. But, for my part, I look back with horror on what we have escaped, and am full of anxiety with regard to the dangers which in my opinion are still to be apprehended both at home and abroad. This business has cast deep roots. Whether it is necessarily connected in theory with Jacobinism is not worth a dispute. The two things are connected in fact. The partisans of the one are the partisans of the other. I know it is common with those who are favorable to the gentlemen of Mr. Fox's party and to their leader, though not at all devoted to all their reforming projects or their Gallican politics, to argue, in palliation of their conduct, that it is not in their power to do all the harm which their actions evidently tend to. It is said, that, as the people will not support them, they may safely be indulged in those eccentric fancies of re-

form, and those theories which lead to nothing. This apology is not very much to the honor of those politicians whose interests are to be adhered to in defiance of their conduct. I cannot flatter myself that these incessant attacks on the constitution of Parliament are safe. It is not in my power to despise the unceasing efforts of a confederacy of about fifty persons of eminence: men, for the far greater part, of very ample fortunes either in possession or in expectancy; men of decided characters and vehement passions; men of very great talents of all kinds, of much boldness, and of the greatest possible spirit of artifice, intrigue, adventure, and enterprise, all operating with unwearied activity and perseverance. These gentlemen are much stronger, too, without doors than some calculate. They have the more active part of the Dissenters with them, and the whole clan of speculators of all denominations, — a large and growing species. They have that floating multitude which goes with events, and which suffers the loss or gain of a battle to decide its opinions of right and wrong. As long as by every art this party keeps alive a spirit of disaffection against the very Constitution of the kingdom, and attributes, as lately it has been in the habit of doing, all the public misfortunes to that Constitution, it is absolutely *impossible* but that some moment must arrive in which they will be enabled to produce a pretended reform and a real revolution. If ever the body of this *compound Constitution* of ours is subverted, either in favor of unlimited monarchy or of wild democracy, that ruin will *most certainly* be the result of this very sort of machinations against the House of Commons. It is not from a confidence in the views or intentions of any statesman that I

think he is to be indulged in these perilous amusements.

47. Before it is made the great object of any man's political life to raise another to power, it is right to consider what are the real dispositions of the person to be so elevated. We are not to form our judgment on these dispositions from the rules and principles of a court of justice, but from those of private discretion, — not looking for what would serve to criminate another, but what is sufficient to direct ourselves. By a comparison of a series of the discourses and actions of certain men for a reasonable length of time, it is impossible not to obtain sufficient indication of the general tendency of their views and principles. There is no other rational mode of proceeding. It is true, that in some one or two perhaps not well-weighed expressions, or some one or two unconnected and doubtful affairs, we may and ought to judge of the actions or words by our previous good or ill opinion of the man. But this allowance has its bounds. It does not extend to any regular course of systematic action, or of constant and repeated discourse. It is against every principle of common sense, and of justice to one's self and to the public, to judge of a series of speeches and actions from the man, and not of the man from the whole tenor of his language and conduct. I have stated the above matters, not as inferring a criminal charge of evil intention. If I had meant to do so, perhaps they are stated with tolerable exactness. But I have no such view. The intentions of these gentlemen may be very pure. I do not dispute it. But I think they are in some great error. If these things are done by Mr. Fox and his friends with good intentions, they are not done less

dangerously; for it shows these good intentions are not under the direction of safe maxims and principles.

48. Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and the gentlemen who call themselves the Phalanx, have not been so very indulgent to others. They have thought proper to ascribe to those members of the House of Commons, who, in exact agreement with the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, abhor and oppose the French system, the basest and most unworthy motives for their conduct; — as if none could oppose that atheistic, immoral, and impolitic project set up in France, so disgraceful and destructive, as I conceive, to human nature itself, but with some sinister intentions. They treat those members on all occasions with a sort of lordly insolence, though they are persons that (whatever homage they may pay to the eloquence of the gentlemen who choose to look down upon them with scorn) are not their inferiors in any particular which calls for and obtains just consideration from the public: not their inferiors in knowledge of public law, or of the Constitution of the kingdom; not their inferiors in their acquaintance with its foreign and domestic interests; not their inferiors in experience or practice of business; not their inferiors in moral character; not their inferiors in the proofs they have given of zeal and industry in the service of their country. Without denying to these gentlemen the respect and consideration which it is allowed justly belongs to them, we see no reason why they should not as well be obliged to defer something to our opinions as that we should be bound blindly and servilely to follow those of Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, Mr. Courtenay,

Mr. Lambton, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Taylor, and others. We are members of Parliament and their equals. We never consider ourselves as their followers. These gentlemen (some of them hardly born when some of us came into Parliament) have thought proper to treat us as deserters, — as if we had been listed into their phalanx like soldiers, and had sworn to live and die in their French principles. This insolent claim of superiority on their part, and of a sort of vassalage to them on that of other members, is what no liberal mind will submit to bear.

49. The society of the Liberty of the Press, the Whig Club, and the Society for Constitutional Information, and (I believe) the Friends of the People, as well as some clubs in Scotland, have, indeed, declared, "that their confidence in and attachment to Mr. Fox has lately been confirmed, strengthened, and increased by the calumnies" (as they are called) "against him." It is true, Mr. Fox and his friends have those testimonies in their favor, against certain old friends of the Duke of Portland. Yet, on a full, serious, and, I think, dispassionate consideration of the whole of what Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan and their friends have acted, said, and written, in this session, instead of doing anything which might tend to procure power, or any share of it whatsoever, to them or to their phalanx, (as they call it,) or to increase their credit, influence, or popularity in the nation, I think it one of my most serious and important public duties, in whatsoever station I may be placed for the short time I have to live, effectually to employ my best endeavors, by every prudent and every lawful means, to traverse all their designs. I have only to lament that my abilities are not greater,

and that my probability of life is not better, for the more effectual pursuit of that object. But I trust that neither the principles nor exertions will die with me. I am the rather confirmed in this my resolution, and in this my wish of transmitting it, because every ray of hope concerning a possible control or mitigation of the enormous mischiefs which the principles of these gentlemen, and which their connections, full as dangerous as their principles, might receive from the influence of the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, on becoming their colleagues in office, is now entirely banished from the mind of every one living. It is apparent, even to the world at large, that, so far from having a power to direct or to guide Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, and the rest, in any important matter, they have not, through this session, been able to prevail on them to forbear, or to delay, or mitigate, or soften, any one act, or any one expression, upon subjects on which they essentially differed.

50. Even if this hope of a possible control did exist, yet the declared opinions, and the uniform line of conduct conformable to those opinions, pursued by Mr. Fox, must become a matter of serious alarm, if he should obtain a power either at court or in Parliament or in the nation at large, and for this plain reason: he must be the most active and efficient member in any administration of which he shall form a part. That a man, or set of men, are guided by such not dubious, but delivered and avowed principles and maxims of policy, as to need a watch and check on them in the exercise of the highest power, ought, in my opinion, to make every man, who is not of the same principles and guided by the

same maxims, a little cautious how he makes himself one of the traverses of a ladder to help such a man, or such a set of men, to climb up to the highest authority. A minister of this country is to be controlled by the House of Commons. He is to be trusted, not *controlled*, by his colleagues in office: if he were to be controlled, government, which ought to be the source of order, would itself become a scene of anarchy. Besides, Mr. Fox is a man of an aspiring and commanding mind, made rather to control than to be controlled, and he never will be nor can be in any administration in which he will be guided by any of those whom I have been accustomed to confide in. It is absurd to think that he would or could. If his own opinions do not control him, nothing can. When we consider of an adherence to a man which leads to his power, we must not only see what the man is, but how he stands related. It is not to be forgotten that Mr. Fox acts in close and inseparable connection with another gentleman of exactly the same description as himself, and who, perhaps, of the two, is the leader. The rest of the body are not a great deal more tractable; and over them, if Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan have authority, most assuredly the Duke of Portland has not the smallest degree of influence.

51. One must take care that a blind partiality to some persons, and as blind an hatred to others, may not enter into our minds under a color of inflexible public principle. We hear, as a reason for clinging to Mr. Fox at present, that nine years ago Mr. Pitt got into power by mischievous intrigues with the court, with the Dissenters, and with other factious people out of Parliament, to the discredit and weak-

ening of the power of the House of Commons. His conduct nine years ago I still hold to be very culpable. There are, however, many things very culpable that I do not know how to punish. My opinion on such matters I must submit to the good of the state, as I have done on other occasions, — and particularly with regard to the authors and managers of the American war, with whom I have acted, both in office and in opposition, with great confidence and cordiality, though I thought many of their acts criminal and impeachable. Whilst the misconduct of Mr. Pitt and his associates was yet recent, it was not possible to get Mr. Fox of himself to take a single step, or even to countenance others in taking any step, upon the ground of that misconduct and false policy; though, if the matters had been then taken up and pursued, such a step could not have appeared so evidently desperate as now it is. So far from pursuing Mr. Pitt, I know that then, and for some time after, some of Mr. Fox's friends were actually, and with no small earnestness, looking out to a coalition with that gentleman. For years I never heard this circumstance of Mr. Pitt's misconduct on that occasion mentioned by Mr. Fox, either in public or in private, as a ground for opposition to that minister. All opposition, from that period to this very session, has proceeded upon the separate measures as they separately arose, without any vindictive retrospect to Mr. Pitt's conduct in 1784. My memory, however, may fail me. I must appeal to the printed debates, which (so far as Mr. Fox is concerned) are unusually accurate.

52. Whatever might have been in our power at an early period, at this day I see no remedy for what

was done in 1784. I had no great hopes even at the time. I was therefore very eager to record a remonstrance on the journals of the House of Commons, as a caution against such a popular delusion in times to come; and this I then feared, and now am certain, is all that could be done. I know of no way of animadverting on the crown. I know of no mode of calling to account the House of Lords, who threw out the India Bill in a way not much to their credit. As little, or rather less, am I able to coerce the people at large, who behaved very unwisely and intemperately on that occasion. Mr. Pitt was then accused, by me as well as others, of attempting to be minister without enjoying the confidence of the House of Commons, though he did enjoy the confidence of the crown. That House of Commons, whose confidence he did not enjoy, unfortunately did not itself enjoy the confidence (though we well deserved it) either of the crown or of the public. For want of that confidence, the then House of Commons did not survive the contest. Since that period Mr. Pitt has enjoyed the confidence of the crown, and of the Lords, and *of the House of Commons*, through two successive Parliaments; and I suspect that he has ever since, and that he does still, enjoy as large a portion, at least, of the confidence of the people without doors as his great rival. Before whom, then, is Mr. Pitt to be impeached, and by whom? The more I consider the matter, the more firmly I am convinced that the idea of proscribing Mr. Pitt *indirectly*, when you cannot *directly punish* him, is as chimerical a project, and as unjustifiable, as it would be to have proscribed Lord North. For supposing that by indirect ways of opposition,

by opposition upon measures which do not relate to the business of 1784, but which on other grounds might prove unpopular, you were to drive him from his seat, this would be no example whatever of punishment for the matters we charge as offences in 1784. On a cool and dispassionate view of the affairs of this time and country, it appears obvious to me that one or the other of those two great men, that is, Mr. Pitt or Mr. Fox, must be minister. They are, I am sorry for it, irreconcilable. Mr. Fox's conduct *in this session* has rendered the idea of his power a matter of serious alarm to many people who were very little pleased with the proceedings of Mr. Pitt in the beginning of his administration. They like neither the conduct of Mr. Pitt in 1784, nor that of Mr. Fox in 1793; but they estimate which of the evils is most pressing at the time, and what is likely to be the consequence of a change. If Mr. Fox be wedded, they must be sensible that his opinions and principles on the now existing state of things at home and abroad must be taken as his portion. In his train must also be taken the whole body of gentlemen who are pledged to him and to each other, and to their common politics and principles. I believe no king of Great Britain ever will adopt, for his confidential servants, that body of gentlemen, holding that body of principles. Even if the present king or his successor should think fit to take that step, I apprehend a general discontent of those who wish that this nation and that Europe should continue in their present state would ensue, — a discontent which, combined with the principles and progress of the new men in power, would shake this kingdom to its foundations. I do not believe

any one political conjecture can be more certain than this.

53. Without at all defending or palliating Mr. Pitt's conduct in 1784, I must observe, that the crisis of 1793, with regard to everything at home and abroad, is full as important as that of 1784 ever was, and, if for no other reason, by being present, is much more important. It is not to nine years ago we are to look for the danger of Mr. Fox's and Mr. Sheridan's conduct, and that of the gentlemen who act with them. It is at *this* very time, and in *this* very session, that, if they had not been strenuously resisted, they would not only have discredited the House of Commons, (as Mr. Pitt did in 1784, when he persuaded the king to reject their advice, and to appeal from them to the people,) but, in my opinion, would have been the means of wholly subverting the House of Commons and the House of Peers, and the whole Constitution actual and virtual, together with the safety and independence of this nation, and the peace and settlement of every state in the now Christian world. It is to our opinion of the nature of Jacobinism, and of the probability, by corruption, faction, and force, of its gaining ground everywhere, that the question whom and what you are to support is to be determined. For my part, without doubt or hesitation, I look upon Jacobinism as the most dreadful and the most shameful evil which ever afflicted mankind, a thing which goes beyond the power of all calculation in its mischief, — and that, if it is suffered to exist in France, we must in England, and speedily too, fall into that calamity.

54. I figure to myself the purpose of these gentlemen accomplished, and this ministry destroyed. I

see that the persons who in that case must rule can be no other than Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Grey, the Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Thurlow, Lord Lauderdale, and the Duke of Norfolk, with the other chiefs of the Friends of the People, the Parliamentary reformers, and the admirers of the French Revolution. The principal of these are all formally pledged to their projects. If the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam should be admitted into that system, (as they might and probably would be,) it is quite certain they could not have the smallest weight in it, — less, indeed, than what they now possess, if less were possible: because they would be less wanted than they now are; and because all those who wished to join them, and to act under them, have been rejected by the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam themselves; and Mr. Fox, finding them thus by themselves disarmed, has built quite a new fabric, upon quite a new foundation. There is no trifling on this subject. We see very distinctly before us the ministry that would be formed and the plan that would be pursued. If we like the plan, we must wish the power of those who are to carry it into execution; but to pursue the political exaltation of those whose political measures we disapprove and whose principles we dissent from is a species of modern politics not easily comprehensible, and which must end in the ruin of the country, if it should continue and spread. Mr. Pitt may be the worst of men, and Mr. Fox may be the best; but, at present, the former is in the interest of his country, and of the order of things long established in Europe: Mr. Fox is not. I have, for one, been born in this order of things, and would fain die in it. I am sure it is sufficient

to make men as virtuous, as happy, and as knowing as anything which Mr. Fox, and his friends abroad or at home, would substitute in its place ; and I should be sorry that any set of politicians should obtain power in England whose principles or schemes should lead them to countenance persons or factions whose object is to introduce some new devised order of things into England, or to support that order where it is already introduced, in France, — a place in which if it can be fixed, in my mind, it must have a certain and decided influence in and upon this kingdom.

This is my account of my conduct to my private friends. I have already said all I wish to say, or nearly so, to the public. I write this with pain and with an heart full of grief.

# PREFACE

TO THE

# ADDRESS OF M. BRISSOT

TO HIS CONSTITUENTS.

TRANSLATED BY

THE LATE WILLIAM BURKE, ESQ.

1794.

# PREFACE TO BRISSOT'S ADDRESS.

THE French Revolution has been the subject of various speculations and various histories. As might be expected, the royalists and the republicans have differed a good deal in their accounts of the principles of that Revolution, of the springs which have set it in motion, and of the true character of those who have been, or still are, the principal actors on that astonishing scene.

They who are inclined to think favorably of that event will undoubtedly object to every state of facts which comes only from the authority of a royalist. Thus much must be allowed by those who are the most firmly attached to the cause of religion, law, and order, (for of such, and not of friends to despotism, the royal party is composed,) — that their very affection to this generous and manly cause, and their abhorrence of a Revolution not less fatal to liberty than to government, may possibly lead them in some particulars to a more harsh representation of the proceedings of their adversaries than would be allowed by the cold neutrality of an impartial judge. This sort of error arises from a source highly laudable; but the exactness of truth may suffer even from the feelings of virtue. History will do justice to the intentions of worthy men, but it will be on its guard against their infirmities; it will examine with great

strictness of scrutiny whatever appears from a writer in favor of his own cause. On the other hand, whatever escapes him, and makes against that cause, comes with the greatest weight.

In this important controversy, the translator of the following work brings forward to the English tribunal of opinion the testimony of a witness beyond all exception. His competence is undoubted. He knows everything which concerns this Revolution to the bottom. He is a chief actor in all the scenes which he presents. No man can object to him as a royalist: the royal party, and the Christian religion, never had a more determined enemy. In a word, it is BRISSOT. It is Brissot, the republican, the Jacobin, and the philosopher, who is brought to give an account of Jacobinism, and of republicanism, and of philosophy.

It is worthy of observation, that this his account of the genius of Jacobinism and its effects is not confined to the period in which that faction came to be divided within itself. In several, and those very important particulars, Brissot's observations apply to the whole of the preceding period before the great schism, and whilst the Jacobins acted as one body; insomuch that the far greater part of the proceedings of the ruling powers since the commencement of the Revolution in France, so strikingly painted, so strongly and so justly reprobated by Brissot, were the acts of Brissot himself and his associates. All the members of the Girondin subdivision were as deeply concerned as any of the Mountain could possibly be, and some of them much more deeply, in those horrid transactions which have filled all the thinking part of Europe with the greatest detestation, and with the

most serious apprehensions for the common liberty and safety.

A question will very naturally be asked, — What could induce Brissot to draw such a picture? He must have been sensible it was his own. The answer is, — The inducement was the same with that which led him to partake in the perpetration of all the crimes the calamitous effects of which he describes with the pen of a master, — ambition. His faction, having obtained their stupendous and unnatural power by rooting out of the minds of his unhappy countrymen every principle of religion, morality, loyalty, fidelity, and honor, discovered, that, when authority came into their hands, it would be a matter of no small difficulty for them to carry on government on the principles by which they had destroyed it.

The rights of men and the new principles of liberty and equality were very unhandy instruments for those who wished to establish a system of tranquillity and order. They who were taught to find nothing to respect in the title and in the virtues of Louis the Sixteenth, a prince succeeding to the throne by the fundamental laws, in the line of a succession of monarchs continued for fourteen hundred years, found nothing which could bind them to an implicit fidelity and dutiful allegiance to Messrs. Brissot, Vergniaud, Condorcet, Anacharsis Clootz, and Thomas Paine.

In this difficulty, they did as well as they could. To govern the people, they must incline the people to obey. The work was difficult, but it was necessary. They were to accomplish it by such materials and by such instruments as they had in their hands. They were to accomplish the purposes of order, mo-

rality, and submission to the laws, from the principles of atheism, profligacy, and sedition. Ill as the disguise became them, they began to assume the mask of an austere and rigid virtue; they exhausted all the stores of their eloquence (which in some of them were not inconsiderable) in declamations against tumult and confusion; they made daily harangues on the blessings of order, discipline, quiet, and obedience to authority; they even showed some sort of disposition to protect such property as had not been confiscated. They who on every occasion had discovered a sort of furious thirst of blood and a greedy appetite for slaughter, who avowed and gloried in the murders and massacres of the 14th of July, of the 5th and 6th of October, and of the 10th of August, now began to be squeamish and fastidious with regard to those of the 2nd of September.

In their pretended scruples on the sequel of the slaughter of the 10th of August, they imposed upon no living creature, and they obtained not the smallest credit for humanity. They endeavored to establish a distinction, by the belief of which they hoped to keep the spirit of murder safely bottled up and sealed for their own purposes, without endangering themselves by the fumes of the poison which they prepared for their enemies.

Roland was the chief and the most accredited of the faction. His morals had furnished little matter of exception against him. Old, domestic, and uxorious, he led a private life sufficiently blameless. He was therefore set up as the *Cato* of the republican party, which did not abound in such characters.

This man, like most of the chiefs, was the manager of a newspaper, in which he promoted the in-

terest of his party. He was a fatal present made by the revolutionists to the unhappy king, as one of his ministers under the new Constitution. Amongst his colleagues were Clavière and Servan. All the three have since that time either lost their heads by the axe of their associates in rebellion, or, to evade their own revolutionary justice, have fallen by their own hands.

These ministers were regarded by the king as in a conspiracy to dethrone him. Nobody who considers the circumstances which preceded the deposition of Louis the Sixteenth, nobody who attends to the subsequent conduct of those ministers, can hesitate about the reality of such a conspiracy. The king certainly had no doubt of it; he found himself obliged to remove them; and the necessity, which first obliged him to choose such regicide ministers constrained him to replace them by Dumouriez the Jacobin, and some others of little efficiency, though of a better description.

A little before this removal, and evidently as a part of the conspiracy, Roland put into the king's hands, as a memorial, the most insolent, seditious, and atrocious libel that has probably ever been penned. This paper Roland a few days after delivered to the National Assembly,* who instantly published and dispersed it over all France; and in order to give it the stronger operation, they declared that he and his brother ministers had carried with them the regret of the nation. None of the writings which have inflamed the Jacobin spirit to a savage fury ever worked up a fiercer ferment through the

* Presented to the king June 13; delivered to him the preceding Monday. — Translator.

whole mass of the republicans in every part of France.

Under the thin veil of *prediction*, he strongly *recommends* all the abominable practices which afterwards followed. In particular, he inflamed the minds of the populace against the respectable and conscientious clergy, who became the chief objects of the massacre, and who were to him the chief objects of a malignity and rancor that one could hardly think to exist in an human heart.

We have the relics of his fanatical persecution here. We are in a condition to judge of the merits of the persecutors and of the persecuted: I do not say the accusers and accused; because, in all the furious declamations of the atheistic faction against these men, not one specific charge has been made upon any one person of those who suffered in their massacre or by their decree of exile.

The king had declared that he would sooner perish under their axe (he too well saw what was preparing for him) than give his sanction to the iniquitous act of proscription under which those innocent people were to be transported.

On this proscription of the clergy a principal part of the ostensible quarrel between the king and those ministers had turned. From the time of the authorized publication of this libel, some of the manœuvres long and uniformly pursued for the king's deposition became more and more evident and declared.

The 10th of August came on, and in the manner in which Roland had predicted: it was followed by the same consequences. The king was deposed, after cruel massacres in the courts and the apartments of his palace and in almost all parts of the city. In

reward of his treason to his old master, Roland was by his new masters named Minister of the Home Department.

The massacres of the 2nd of September were begotten by the massacres of the 10th of August. They were universally foreseen and hourly expected. During this short interval between the two murderous scenes, the furies, male and female, cried out havoc as loudly and as fiercely as ever. The ordinary jails were all filled with prepared victims; and when they overflowed, churches were turned into jails. At this time the relentless Roland had the care of the general police; — he had for his colleague the bloody Danton, who was Minister of Justice; the insidious Pétion was Mayor of Paris; the treacherous Manuel was Procurator of the Common Hall. The magistrates (some or all of them) were evidently the authors of this massacre. Lest the national guard should, by their very name, be reminded of their duty in preserving the lives of their fellow-citizens, the Common Council of Paris, pretending that it was in vain to think of resisting the murderers, (although in truth neither their numbers nor their arms were at all formidable,) obliged those guards to draw the charges from their muskets, and took away their bayonets. One of their journalists, and, according to their fashion, one of their leading statesmen, Gorsas, mentions this fact in his newspaper, which he formerly called the Galley Journal. The title was well suited to the paper and its author. For some felonies he had been sentenced to the galleys; but, by the benignity of the late king, this felon (to be one day advanced to the rank of a regicide) had been pardoned and released at the inter-

cession of the ambassadors of Tippoo Sultan. His gratitude was such as might naturally have been expected; and it has lately been rewarded as it deserved. This liberated galley-slave was raised, in mockery of all criminal law, to be Minister of Justice: he became from his elevation a more conspicuous object of accusation, and he has since received the punishment of his former crimes in proscription and death.

It will be asked, how the Minister of the Home Department was employed at this crisis. The day after the massacre had commenced, Roland appeared; but not with the powerful apparatus of a protecting magistrate, to rescue those who had survived the slaughter of the first day: nothing of this. On the 3rd of September, (that is, the day after the commencement of the massacre,*) he writes a long, elaborate, verbose epistle to the Assembly, in which, after magnifying, according to the *bon-ton* of the Revolution, his own integrity, humanity, courage, and patriotism, he first directly justifies all the bloody proceedings of the 10th of August. He considers the slaughter of that day as a necessary measure for defeating a conspiracy which (with a full knowledge of the falsehood of his assertion) he asserts to have been formed for a massacre of the people of Paris, and which he more than insinuates was the work of his late unhappy master, — who was universally known to carry his dread of shedding the blood of his most guilty subjects to an excess.

"Without the day of the 10th," says he, "it is evident that we should have been lost. The court, pre-

* Letter to the National Assembly, signed, *The Minister of the Interior,* ROLAND; dated Paris, Sept. 3rd, *4th year of Liberty.*

pared for a long time, waited for the hour which was to accumulate all treasons, to display over Paris the standard of death, and to reign there by terror. The sense of the people, (*le sentiment*,) always just and ready when their opinion is not corrupted, foresaw the epoch marked for their destruction, and rendered it fatal to the conspirators." He then proceeds, in the cant which has been applied to palliate all their atrocities from the 14th of July, 1789, to the present time: — "It is in the nature of things," continues he, "and in that of the human heart, that victory should bring with it *some* excess. The sea, agitated by a violent storm, roars *long* after the tempest; but *everything has bounds*, which ought *at length* to be observed."

In this memorable epistle, he considers such *excesses* as fatalities arising from the very nature of things, and consequently not to be punished. He allows a space of time for the duration of these agitations; and lest he should be thought rigid and too scanty in his measure, he thinks it may be *long*. But he would have things to cease *at length*. But when? and where? — When they may approach his own person.

"*Yesterday*," says he, "the ministers *were denounced: vaguely*, indeed, as to the *matter*, because subjects of reproach were wanting; but with that warmth and force of assertion which strike the imagination and seduce it for a moment, and which mislead and destroy confidence, without which no man should remain in place in a free government. *Yesterday*, *again*, in an assembly of the presidents of all the sections, convoked by the ministers, with the view of conciliating all minds, and of mutual

explanation, I perceived *that distrust which suspects, interrogates, and fetters operations.*"

In this manner (that is, in mutual suspicions and interrogatories) this virtuous Minister of the Home Department, and all the magistracy of Paris, spent the first day of the massacre, the atrocity of which has spread horror and alarm throughout Europe. It does not appear that the putting a stop to the massacre had any part in the object of their meeting, or in their consultations when they were met. Here was a minister tremblingly alive to his own safety, dead to that of his fellow-citizens, eager to preserve his place, and worse than indifferent about its most important duties. Speaking of the people, he says "that their hidden enemies may make use of this *agitation*" (the tender appellation which he gives to horrid massacre) "to hurt *their best friends and their most able defenders. Already the example begins:* let it restrain and arrest a *just* rage. Indignation carried to its height commences proscriptions which fall only on the *guilty*, but in which error and particular passions may shortly involve the *honest man.*"

He saw that the able artificers in the trade and mystery of murder did not choose that their skill should be unemployed after their first work, and that they were full as ready to cut off their rivals as their enemies. This gave him *one* alarm that was serious. This letter of Roland, in every part of it, lets out the secret of all the parties in this Revolution. *Plena rimarum est; hac atque illac perfluit.* We see that none of them condemn the occasional practice of murder, — provided it is properly applied, — provided it is kept within the bounds which each of those parties think proper to prescribe. In this case Roland

feared, that, if what was occasionally useful should become habitual, the practice might go further than was convenient. It might involve the best friends of the last Revolution, as it had done the heroes of the first Revolution: he feared that it would not be confined to the La Fayettes and Clermont-Tonnerres, the Duponts and Barnaves, but that it might extend to the Brissots and Vergniauds, to the Condorcets, the Pétions, and to himself. Under this apprehension there is no doubt that his humane feelings were altogether unaffected.

His observations on the massacre of the preceding day are such as cannot be passed over. "Yesterday," said he, "was a day upon the events of which it is perhaps necessary to leave a *veil*. I know that the people with their vengeance *mingled a sort of justice:* they did not take for victims *all* who presented themselves to their fury; they directed it to *them who had for a long time been spared by the sword of the law*, and who they *believed*, from the peril of circumstances, should be sacrificed without delay. But I know that it is easy to *villains and traitors* to misrepresent this *effervescence*, and that it must be checked; I know that we owe to all France the declaration, that the *executive power* could not foresee or prevent this excess; I know that it is due to the constituted authorities to place a limit to it, or consider themselves as abolished."

In the midst of this carnage he thinks of nothing but throwing a veil over it, — which was at once to cover the guilty from punishment, and to extinguish all compassion for the sufferers. He apologizes for it; in fact, he justifies it. He who (as the reader has just seen in what is quoted from this letter) feels

so much indignation at "vague denunciations," when made against himself, and from which he then feared nothing more than the subversion of his power, is not ashamed to consider the charge of a conspiracy to massacre the Parisians, brought against his master upon denunciations as vague as possible, or rather upon no denunciations, as a perfect justification of the monstrous proceedings against him. He is not ashamed to call the murder of the unhappy priests in the Carmes, who were under no criminal denunciation whatsoever, a "*vengeance* mingled with a *sort of justice*"; he observes that they "had been a long time spared by the sword of the law," and calls by anticipation all those who should represent this "*effervescence*" in other colors *villains and traitors:* he did not then foresee how soon himself and his accomplices would be under the necessity of assuming the pretended character of this new sort of "*villany and treason*," in the hope of obliterating the memory of their former real *villanies and treasons;* he did not foresee that in the course of six months a formal manifesto on the part of himself and his faction, written by his confederate Brissot, was to represent this "*effervescence*" as another "*St. Bartholomew*," and speak of it as "*having made humanity shudder, and sullied the Revolution forever.*" *

It is very remarkable that he takes upon himself to know the motives of the assassins, their policy, and even what they "believed." How could this be, if he had no connection with them? He praises the murderers for not having taken as yet *all* the lives of those who had, as he calls it, "*presented themselves* as victims to their fury." He paints the miserable

* See p. 12 and p. 13 of this translation.

prisoners, who had been forcibly piled upon one another in the Church of the Carmelites by his faction, as *presenting themselves* as victims to their fury, — as if death was their choice, or (allowing the idiom of his language to make this equivocal) as if they were by some accident *presented* to the fury of their assassins: whereas he knew that the leaders of the murderers sought these pure and innocent victims in the places where they had deposited them and were sure to find them. The very selection, which he praises as a *sort of justice* tempering their fury, proves beyond a doubt the foresight, deliberation, and method with which this massacre was made. He knew that circumstance on the very day of the commencement of the massacres, when, in all probability, he had begun this letter, — for he presented it to the Assembly on the very next.

Whilst, however, he defends these acts, he is conscious that they will appear in another light to the world. He therefore acquits the executive power, that is, he acquits himself, (but only by his own assertion,) of those acts of "*vengeance mixed with a sort of justice*," as an "*excess* which he could neither foresee nor prevent." He could not, he says, foresee these acts, when he tells us the people of Paris had sagacity so well to foresee the designs of the court on the 10th of August, — to foresee them so well as to mark the precise epoch on which they were to be executed, and to contrive to anticipate them on the very day: he could not foresee these events, though he declares in this very letter that victory *must* bring with it some *excess*, — that "the sea roars *long* after the tempest." So far as to his foresight. As to his disposition to prevent, if he had foreseen,

the massacres of that day, — this will be judged by his care in putting a stop to the massacre then going on. This was no matter of foresight: he was in the very midst of it. He does not so much as pretend that he had used any force to put a stop to it. But if he had used any, the sanction given under his hand to a sort of justice in the murderers was enough to disarm the protecting force.

That approbation of what they had already done had its natural effect on the executive assassins, then in the paroxysm of their fury, as well as on their employers, then in the midst of the execution of their deliberate, cold-blooded system of murder. He did not at all differ from either of them in the principle of those executions, but only in the time of their duration, — and that only as it affected himself. This, though to him a great consideration, was none to his confederates, who were at the same time his rivals. They were encouraged to accomplish the work they had in hand. They did accomplish it; and whilst this grave moral epistle from a grave minister, recommending a cessation of their work of "vengeance mingled with a sort of justice," was before a grave assembly, the authors of the massacres proceeded without interruption in their business for four days together, — that is, until the seventh of that month, and until all the victims of the first proscription in Paris and at Versailles and several other places were immolated at the shrine of the grim Moloch of liberty and equality. All the priests, all the loyalists, all the first essayists and novices of revolution in 1789, that could be found, were promiscuously put to death.

Through the whole of this long letter of Roland, it is curious to remark how the nerve and vigor of his

style, which had spoken so potently to his sovereign, is relaxed when he addresses himself to the *sans-culottes*, — how that strength and dexterity of arm, with which he parries and beats down the sceptre, is enfeebled and lost when he comes to fence with the poniard. When he speaks to the populace, he can no longer be direct. The whole compass of the language is tried to find synonymes and circumlocutions for massacre and murder. Things are never called by their common names. Massacre is sometimes *agitation*, sometimes *effervescence*, sometimes *excess*, sometimes too continued an exercise of a *revolutionary power*.

However, after what had passed had been praised, or excused, or pardoned, he declares loudly against such proceedings *in future*. Crimes had pioneered and made smooth the way for the march of the virtues, and from that time order and justice and a sacred regard for personal property were to become the rules for the new democracy. Here Roland and the Brissotins leagued for their own preservation, by endeavoring to preserve peace. This short story will render many of the parts of Brissot's pamphlet, in which Roland's views and intentions are so often alluded to, the more intelligible in themselves, and the more useful in their application by the English reader.

Under the cover of these artifices, Roland, Brissot, and their party hoped to gain the bankers, merchants, substantial tradesmen, hoarders of assignats, and purchasers of the confiscated lands of the clergy and gentry to join with their party, as holding out some sort of security to the effects which they possessed, whether these effects were the acquisitions of fair commerce,

or the gains of jobbing in the misfortunes of their country and the plunder of their fellow-citizens. In this design the party of Roland and Brissot succeeded in a great degree. They obtained a majority in the National Convention. Composed, however, as that assembly is, their majority was far from steady. But whilst they appeared to gain the Convention, and many of the outlying departments, they lost the city of Paris entirely and irrecoverably : it was fallen into the hands of Marat, Robespierre, and Danton. Their instruments were the *sans-culottes*, or rabble, who domineered in that capital, and were wholly at the devotion of those incendiaries, and received their daily pay. The people of property were of no consequence, and trembled before Marat and his janizaries. As that great man had not obtained the helm of the state, it was not yet come to his turn to act the part of Brissot and his friends in the assertion of subordination and regular government. But Robespierre has survived both these rival chiefs, and is now the great patron of Jacobin order.

To balance the exorbitant power of Paris, (which threatened to leave nothing to the National Convention but a character as insignificant as that which the first Assembly had assigned to the unhappy Louis the Sixteenth,) the faction of Brissot, whose leaders were Roland, Pétion, Vergniaud, Isnard, Condorcet, &c., &c., &c., applied themselves to gain the great commercial towns, Lyons, Marseilles, Rouen, Nantes, and Bordeaux. The republicans of the Brissotin description, to whom the concealed royalists, still very numerous, joined themselves, obtained a temporary superiority in all these places. In Bordeaux, on account of the activity and eloquence of some of its

representatives, this superiority was the most distinguished. This last city is seated on the Garonne, or Gironde; and being the centre of a department named from that river, the appellation of Girondists was given to the whole party. These, and some other towns, declared strongly against the principles of anarchy, and against the despotism of Paris. Numerous addresses were sent to the Convention, promising to maintain its authority, which the addressers were pleased to consider as legal and constitutional, though chosen, not to compose an executive government, but to form a plan for a Constitution. In the Convention measures were taken to obtain an armed force from the several departments to maintain the freedom of that body, and to provide for the personal safety of the members: neither of which, from the 14th of July, 1789, to this hour, have been really enjoyed by their assemblies sitting under any denomination.

This scheme, which was well conceived, had not the desired success. Paris, from which the Convention did not dare to move, though some threats of such a departure were from time to time thrown out, was too powerful for the party of the Gironde. Some of the proposed guards, but neither with regularity nor in force, did indeed arrive: they were debauched as fast as they came, or were sent to the frontiers. The game played by the revolutionists in 1789, with respect to the French guards of the unhappy king, was now played against the departmental guards, called together for the protection of the revolutionists. Every part of their own policy comes round, and strikes at their own power and their own lives.

The Parisians, on their part, were not slow in tak-

ing the alarm. They had just reason to apprehend, that, if they permitted the smallest delay, they should see themselves besieged by an army collected from all parts of France. Violent threats were thrown out against that city in the Assembly. Its total destruction was menaced. A very remarkable expression was used in these debates, — "that in future times it might be inquired on what part of the Seine Paris had stood." The faction which ruled in Paris, too bold to be intimidated and too vigilant to be surprised, instantly armed themselves. In their turn, they accused the Girondists of a treasonable design to break *the republic one and indivisible* (whose unity they contended could only be preserved by the supremacy of Paris) into a number of *confederate* commonwealths. The Girondin faction on this account received also the name of *Federalists*.

Things on both sides hastened fast to extremities. Paris, the mother of equality, was herself to be equalized. Matters were come to this alternative: either that city must be reduced to a mere member of the federative republic, or the Convention, chosen, as they said, by all France, was to be brought regularly and systematically under the dominion of the Common Hall, and even of any one of the sections of Paris.

In this awful contest, thus brought to issue, the great mother club of the Jacobins was entirely in the Parisian interest. The Girondins no longer dared to show their faces in that assembly. Nine tenths at least of the Jacobin clubs, throughout France, adhered to the great patriarchal Jacobinière of Paris, to which they were (to use their own term) *affiliated*. No authority of magistracy, judicial or executive,

had the least weight, whenever these clubs chose to interfere: and they chose to interfere in everything, and on every occasion. All hope of gaining them to the support of property, or to the acknowledgment of any law but their own will, was evidently vain and hopeless. Nothing but an armed insurrection against their anarchical authority could answer the purpose of the Girondins. Anarchy was to be cured by rebellion, as it had been caused by it.

As a preliminary to this attempt on the Jacobins and the commons of Paris, which it was hoped would be supported by all the remaining property of France, it became absolutely necessary to prepare a manifesto, laying before the public the whole policy, genius, character, and conduct of the partisans of club government. To make this exposition as fully and clearly as it ought to be made, it was of the same unavoidable necessity to go through a series of transactions, in which all those concerned in this Revolution were, at the several periods of their activity, deeply involved. In consequence of this design, and under these difficulties, Brissot prepared the following declaration of his party, which he executed with no small ability; and in this manner the whole mystery of the French Revolution was laid open in all its parts.

It is almost needless to mention to the reader the fate of the design to which this pamphlet was to be subservient. The Jacobins of Paris were more prompt than their adversaries. They were the readiest to resort to what La Fayette calls the *most sacred of all duties, that of insurrection.* Another era of holy insurrection commenced the 31st of last May. As the first fruits of that insurrection grafted on in-

surrection, and of that rebellion improving upon rebellion, the sacred, irresponsible character of the members of the Convention was laughed to scorn. They had themselves shown in their proceedings against the late king how little the most fixed principles are to be relied upon, in their revolutionary Constitution. The members of the Girondin party in the Convention were seized upon, or obliged to save themselves by flight. The unhappy author of this piece, with twenty of his associates, suffered together on the scaffold, after a trial the iniquity of which puts all description to defiance.

The English reader will draw from this work of Brissot, and from the result of the last struggles of this party, some useful lessons. He will be enabled to judge of the information of those who have undertaken to guide and enlighten us, and who, for reasons best known to themselves, have chosen to paint the French Revolution and its consequences in brilliant and flattering colors. They will know how to appreciate the liberty of France, which has been so much magnified in England. They will do justice to the wisdom and goodness of their sovereign and his Parliament, who have put them into a state of defence, in the war audaciously made upon us in favor of that kind of liberty. When we see (as here we must see) in their true colors the character and policy of our enemies, our gratitude will become an active principle. It will produce a strong and zealous coöperation with the efforts of our government in favor of a Constitution under which we enjoy advantages the full value of which the querulous weakness of human nature requires sometimes the opportunity of a comparison to understand and to relish.

Our confidence in those who watch for the public will not be lessened. We shall be sensible that to alarm us in the late circumstances of our affairs was not for our molestation, but for our security. We shall be sensible that this alarm was not ill-timed, — and that it ought to have been given, as it was given, before the enemy had time fully to mature and accomplish their plans for reducing us to the condition of France, as that condition is faithfully and without exaggeration described in the following work. We now have our arms in our hands; we have the means of opposing the sense, the courage, and the resources of England to the deepest, the most craftily devised, the best combined, and the most extensive design that ever was carried on, since the beginning of the world, against all property, all order, all religion, all law, and all real freedom.

The reader is requested to attend to the part of this pamphlet which relates to the conduct of the Jacobins with regard to the Austrian Netherlands, which they call Belgia or Belgium. It is from page seventy-two to page eighty-four of this translation. Here their views and designs upon all their neighbors are fully displayed. Here the whole mystery of their ferocious politics is laid open with the utmost clearness. Here the manner in which they would treat every nation into which they could introduce their doctrines and influence is distinctly marked. We see that no nation was out of danger, and we see what the danger was with which every nation was threatened. The writer of this pamphlet throws the blame of several of the most violent of the proceedings on the other party. He and his friends, at the time alluded to, had a majority in the National As-

sembly. He admits that neither he nor they *ever publicly* opposed these measures; but he attributes their silence to a fear of rendering themselves suspected. It is most certain, that, whether from fear or from approbation, they never discovered any dislike of those proceedings till Dumouriez was driven from the Netherlands. But whatever their motive was, it is plain that the most violent is, and since the Revolution has always been, the predominant party.

If Europe could not be saved without our interposition, (most certainly it could not,) I am sure there is not an Englishman who would not blush to be left out of the general effort made in favor of the general safety. But we are not secondary parties in this war; *we are principals in the danger, and ought to be principals in the exertion.* If any Englishman asks whether the designs of the French assassins are confined to the spot of Europe which they actually desolate, the citizen Brissot, the author of this book, and the author of the declaration of war against England, will give him his answer. He will find in this book, that the republicans are divided into factions full of the most furious and destructive animosity against each other; but he will find also that there is one point in which they perfectly agree: that they are all enemies alike to the government of all other nations, and only contend with each other about the means of propagating their tenets and extending their empire by conquest.

It is true that in this present work, which the author professedly designed for an appeal to foreign nations and posterity, he has dressed up the philosophy of his own faction in as decent a garb as he

could to make her appearance in public; but through every disguise her hideous figure may be distinctly seen. If, however, the reader still wishes to see her in all her naked deformity, I would further refer him to a private letter of Brissot, written towards the end of the last year, and quoted in a late very able pamphlet of Mallet Du Pan. "We must" (says our philosopher) "*set fire to the four corners of Europe*"; in that alone is our safety. "*Dumouriez cannot suit us.* I always distrusted him. Miranda is the general for us: he understands the *revolutionary power;* he has *courage*, *lights*," &c.* Here everything is fairly avowed in plain language. The triumph of philosophy is the universal conflagration of Europe; the only real dissatisfaction with Dumouriez is a suspicion of his moderation; and the secret motive of that preference which in this very pamphlet the author gives to Miranda, though without assigning his reasons, is declared to be the superior fitness of that foreign adventurer for the purposes of subversion and destruction. On the other hand, if there can be any man in this country so hardy as to undertake the defence or the apology of the present monstrous usurpers of France, and if it should be said in their favor, that it is not just to credit the charges of their enemy Brissot against them, who have actually tried and condemned him on the very same charges among others, we are luckily supplied with the best possible evidence in support of this part of his book against them: it comes from among themselves. Camille Desmoulins published the History of the Brissotins in answer to this very address of Bris-

* See the translation of Mallet Du Pan's work, printed for Owen, p. 53.

sot. It was the counter-manifesto of the last holy revolution of the 31st of May; and the flagitious orthodoxy of his writings at that period has been admitted in the late scrutiny of him by the Jacobin Club, when they saved him from that guillotine "which he grazed." In the beginning of his work he displays "the task of glory," as he calls it, which presented itself at the opening of the Convention. All is summed up in two points: "To create the French Republic; *to disorganize Europe; perhaps to purge it of its tyrants by the eruption of the volcanic principles of equality.*" * The coincidence is exact; the proof is complete and irresistible.

In a cause like this, and in a time like the present, there is no neutrality. They who are not actively, and with decision and energy, against Jacobinism are its partisans. They who do not dread it love it. It cannot be viewed with indifference. It is a thing made to produce a powerful impression on the feelings. Such is the nature of Jacobinism, such is the nature of man, that this system must be regarded either with enthusiastic admiration, or with the highest degree of detestation, resentment, and horror.

Another great lesson may be taught by this book, and by the fortune of the author and his party: I mean a lesson drawn from the consequences of engaging in daring innovations from an hope that we may be able to limit their mischievous operation at our pleasure, and by our policy to secure ourselves against the effect of the evil examples we hold out to the world. This lesson is taught through almost all the important pages of history; but never has it been

* See the translation of the History of the Brissotins by Camille Desmoulins, printed for Owen, p. 2.

taught so clearly and so awfully as at this hour. The revolutionists who have just suffered an ignominious death, under the sentence of the revolutionary tribunal, (a tribunal composed of those with whom they had triumphed in the total destruction of the ancient government,) were by no means ordinary men, or without very considerable talents and resources. But with all their talents and resources, and the apparent momentary extent of their power, we see the fate of their projects, their power, and their persons. We see before our eyes the absurdity of thinking to establish order upon principles of confusion, or with the materials and instruments of rebellion to build up a solid and stable government.

Such partisans of a republic amongst us as may not have the worst intentions will see that the principles, the plans, the manners, the morals, and the whole system of France is altogether as adverse to the formation and duration of any rational scheme of a republic as it is to that of a monarchy, absolute or limited. It is, indeed, a system which can only answer the purposes of robbers and murderers.

The translator has only to say for himself, that he has found some difficulty in this version. His original author, through haste, perhaps, or through the perturbation of a mind filled with a great and arduous enterprise, is often obscure. There are some passages, too, in which his language requires to be first translated into French, — at least into such French as the Academy would in former times have tolerated. He writes with great force and vivacity; but the language, like everything else in his country, has undergone a revolution. The translator thought it best to be as literal as possible, conceiving such a transla-

tion would perhaps be the most fit to convey the author's peculiar mode of thinking. In this way the translator has no credit for style, but he makes it up in fidelity. Indeed, the facts and observations are so much more important than the style, that no apology is wanted for producing them in any intelligible manner.

# APPENDIX.

[The Address of M. Brissot to his Constituents being now almost forgotten, it has been thought right to add, as an Appendix, that part of it to which Mr. Burke points our particular attention, and upon which he so forcibly comments in his Preface.]

THREE sorts of anarchy have ruined our affairs in Belgium.

The anarchy of the administration of Pache, which has completely disorganized the supply of our armies; which by that disorganization reduced the army of Dumouriez to stop in the middle of its conquests; which struck it motionless through the months of November and December; which hindered it from joining Beurnonville and Custine, and from forcing the Prussians and Austrians to repass the Rhine, and afterwards from putting themselves in a condition to invade Holland sooner than they did.

To this state of ministerial anarchy it is necessary to join that other anarchy which disorganized the troops, and occasioned their habits of pillage; and lastly, that anarchy which created the revolutionary power, and forced the union to France of the countries we had invaded, before things were ripe for such a measure.

Who could, however, doubt the frightful evils that were occasioned in our armies by that doctrine of anarchy which, under the shadow of equality of *right*, would establish equality of fact? This is universal

equality, the scourge of society, as the other is the support of society: an anarchical doctrine which would level all things, talents and ignorance, virtues and vices, places, usages, and services; a doctrine which begot that fatal project of organizing the army, presented by Dubois de Crancé, to which it will be indebted for a complete disorganization.

Mark the date of the presentation of the system of this equality of fact, entire equality. It had been projected and decreed even at the very opening of the Dutch campaign. If any project could encourage the want of discipline in the soldiers, any scheme could disgust and banish good officers, and throw all things into confusion at the moment when order alone could give victory, it is this project, in truth, so stubbornly defended by the anarchists, and transplanted into their ordinary tactic.

How could they expect that there should exist any discipline, any subordination, when even in the camp they permit motions, censures, and denunciations of officers and of generals? Does not such a disorder destroy all the respect that is due to superiors, and all the mutual confidence without which success cannot be hoped for? For the spirit of distrust makes the soldier suspicious, and intimidates the general. The first discerns treason in every danger; the second, always placed between the necessity of conquest and the image of the scaffold, dares not raise himself to bold conception, and those heights of courage which electrify an army and insure victory. Turenne, in our time, would have carried his head to the scaffold; for he was sometimes beat: but the reason why he more frequently conquered was, that his discipline was severe; it was, that his soldiers, confid-

ing in his talents, never muttered discontent instead of fighting. Without reciprocal confidence between the soldier and the general, there can be no army, no victory, especially in a free government.

Is it not to the same system of anarchy, of equalization, and want of subordination, which has been recommended in some clubs and defended even in the Convention, that we owe the pillages, the murders, the enormities of all kinds, which it was difficult for the officers to put a stop to, from the general spirit of insubordination, — excesses which have rendered the French name odious to the Belgians? Again, is it not to this system of anarchy, and of robbery, that we are indebted for the *revolutionary power*, which has so justly aggravated the hatred of the Belgians against France?

What did enlightened republicans think before the 10th of August, men who wished for liberty, *not only for their own country, but for all Europe? They believed that they could generally establish it by exciting the governed against the governors, in letting the people see the facility and the advantages of such insurrections.*

But how can the people be led to that point? By the example of good government established among us; by the example of order; by the care of spreading nothing but moral ideas among them: to respect their properties and their rights; to respect their prejudices, even when we combat them: by disinterestedness in defending the people; by a zeal to extend the spirit of liberty amongst them.

This system was at first followed.* Excellent pam-

* The most seditious libels upon all governments, in order to excite insurrection in Spain, Holland, and other countries. — TRANSLATOR.

phlets from the pen of Condorcet prepared the people for liberty; the 10th of August, the republican decrees, the battle of Valmy, the retreat of the Prussians, the victory of Jemappes, all spoke in favor of France: all was rapidly destroyed by *the revolutionary power*. Without doubt, good intentions made the majority of the Assembly adopt it; they would plant the tree of liberty in a foreign soil, under the shade of a people already free. To the eyes of the people of Belgium it seemed but the mask of a new foreign tyranny. This opinion was erroneous; I will suppose it so for a moment; but still this opinion of Belgium deserved to be considered. In general, we have always considered our own opinions and our own intentions rather than the people whose cause we defend. We have given those people a will: that is to say, we have more than ever alienated them from liberty.

How could the Belgic people believe themselves free, since we exercise for them, and over them, the rights of sovereignty, — when, without consulting them, we suppress, all in a mass, their ancient usages, their abuses, their prejudices, those classes of society which without doubt are contrary to the spirit of liberty, but the utility of whose destruction was not as yet proved to them? How could they believe themselves free and sovereign, when we made them take such an oath as we thought fit, as a test to give them the right of voting? How could they believe themselves free, when openly despising their religious worship, which religious worship that superstitious people valued beyond their liberty, beyond even their life; when we proscribed their priests; when we banished them from their assemblies, where they

were in the practice of seeing them govern ; when we seized their revenues, their domains, and riches, to the profit of the nation ; when we carried to the very censer those hands which they regarded as profane ? Doubtless these operations were founded on principles ; but those principles ought to have had the consent of the Belgians, before they were carried into practice ; otherwise they necessarily became our most cruel enemies.

Arrived ourselves at the last bounds of liberty and equality, trampling under our feet all human superstitions, (after, however, a four years' war with them,) we attempt all at once to raise to the same eminence men, strangers even to the first elementary principles of liberty, and plunged for fifteen hundred years in ignorance and superstition ; we wished to force men to see, when a thick cataract covered their eyes, even before we had removed that cataract ; we would force men to see, whose dulness of character had raised a mist before their eyes, and before that character was altered.*

* It may not be amiss, once for all, to remark on the style of all the philosophical politicians of France. Without any distinction in their several sects and parties, they agree in treating all nations who will not conform their government, laws, manners, and religion to the new French fashion, as *an herd of slaves*. They consider the content with which men live under those governments as stupidity, and all attachment to religion as the effect of the grossest ignorance.

The people of the Netherlands, by their Constitution, are as much entitled to be called free as any nation upon earth. The Austrian government ( until some wild attempts the Emperor Joseph made on the French principle, but which have been since abandoned by the court of Vienna ) has been remarkably mild. No people were more at their ease than the Flemish subjects, particularly the lower classes. It is curious to hear this great oculist talk of couching the *cataract* by which the Netherlands were *blinded*, and hindered from seeing in

Do you believe that the doctrine which now prevails in France would have found many partisans among us in 1789? No: a revolution in ideas and in prejudices is not made with that rapidity; it moves gradually; it does not escalade.

Philosophy does not inspire by violence, nor by seduction; nor is it the sword that begets love of liberty.

Joseph the Second also borrowed the language of philosophy, when he wished to suppress the monks in Belgium, and to seize upon their revenues. There was seen on him a mask only of philosophy, covering the hideous countenance of a greedy despot; and the people ran to arms. Nothing better than another kind of despotism has been seen in the *revolutionary power*.

We have seen in the commissioners of the National Convention nothing but proconsuls working the mine of Belgium for the profit of the French nation, seeking to conquer it for the sovereign of Paris, — either to aggrandize his empire, or to share the burdens of the debts, and furnish a rich prize to the robbers who domineered in France.

Do you believe the Belgians have ever been the

its proper colors the beautiful vision of the French republic, which he has himself painted with so masterly an hand. That people must needs be dull, blind, and brutalized by fifteen hundred years of superstition, (the time elapsed since the introduction of Christianity amongst them,) who could prefer their former state to the *present state of France!* The reader will remark, that the only difference between Brissot and his adversaries is in the *mode* of bringing other nations into the pale of the French republic. *They* would abolish the order and classes of society, and all religion, at a stroke: Brissot would have just the same thing done, but with more address and management. — Translator.

dupes of those well-rounded periods which they vended in the pulpit in order to familiarize them to the idea of an union with France? Do you believe they were ever imposed upon by those votes and resolutions, made by what is called acclamation, for their union, of which corruption paid one part,* and fear forced the remainder? Who, at this time of day, is unacquainted with the springs and wires of their miserable puppet-show? *Who does not know the farces of primary assemblies, composed of a president, of a secretary, and of some assistants, whose day's work was paid for?* No: it is not by means which belong only to thieves and despots that the foundations of liberty can be laid in an enslaved country. It is not by those means, that a new-born republic, a people who know not yet the elements of republican governments, can be united to us. Even slaves do not suffer themselves to be seduced by such artifices; and if they have not the strength to resist, they have at least the sense to know how to appreciate the value of such an attempt.

If we would attach the Belgians to us, we must at least enlighten their minds by *good writings;* we must send to them *missionaries*, and not despotic commissioners.† We ought to give them time to see, — to perceive by themselves the advantages of liberty, the unhappy effects of superstition, the fatal spirit of priesthood. And whilst we waited for this moral

* See the correspondence of Dumouriez, especially the letter of the 12th of March.

† They have not as yet proceeded farther with regard to the English dominions. Here we only see as yet *the good writings* of Paine, and of his learned associates, and the labors of the *missionary clubs*, and other zealous instructors. — TRANSLATOR.

revolution, we should have accepted the offers which they incessantly repeated to join to the French army an army of fifty thousand men, to entertain them at their own expense, and to advance to France the specie of which she stood in need.

But have we ever seen those fifty thousand soldiers who were to join our army as soon as the standard of liberty should be displayed in Belgium? Have we ever seen those treasures which they were to count into our hands? Can we either accuse the sterility of their country, or the penury of their treasure, or the coldness of their love for liberty? No! despotism and anarchy, these are the benefits which we have transplanted into their soil. We have acted, we have spoken, like masters; and from that time we have found the Flemings nothing but jugglers, who made the grimace of liberty for money, or slaves, who in their hearts cursed their new tyrants. Our commissioners address them in this sort: "You have nobles and priests among you: drive them out without delay, or we will neither be your brethren nor your patrons." They answered: "Give us but time; only leave to us the care of reforming these institutions." Our answer to them was: "No! it must be at the moment, it must be on the spot; or we will treat you as enemies, we will abandon you to the resentment of the Austrians."

What could the disarmed Belgians object to all this, surrounded as they were by seventy thousand men? They had only to hold their tongues, and to bow down their heads before their masters. They did hold their tongues, and their silence is received as a sincere and free assent.

Have not the strangest artifices been adopted to

prevent that people from retreating, and to constrain them to an union? It was foreseen, that, as long as they were unable to effect an union, the States would preserve the supreme authority amongst themselves. Under pretence, therefore, of relieving the people, and of exercising the sovereignty in their right, at one stroke they abolished all the duties and taxes, they shut up all the treasuries. From that time no more receipts, no more public money, no more means of paying the salaries of any man in office appointed by the States. Thus was anarchy organized amongst the people, that they might be compelled to throw themselves into our arms. It became necessary for those who administered their affairs, under the penalty of being exposed to sedition, and in order to avoid their throats being cut, to have recourse to the treasury of France. What did they find in this treasury? ASSIGNATS.—— These assignats were advanced at par to Belgium. By this means, on the one hand, they naturalized this currency in that country, and on the other, they expected to make a good pecuniary transaction. Thus it is that covetousness cut its throat with its own hands. *The Belgians have seen in this forced introduction of assignats nothing but a double robbery;* and they have only the more violently hated the union with France.

Recollect the solicitude of the Belgians on that subject. With what earnestness did they conjure you to take off a retroactive effect from these assignats, and to prevent them from being applied to the payment of debts that were contracted anterior to the union!

Did not this language energetically enough signify

that they looked upon the assignats as a leprosy, and the union as a deadly contagion?

And yet what regard was paid to so just a demand? It was buried in the Committee of Finance. That committee wanted to make anarchy the means of an union. They only busied themselves in making the Belgic Provinces subservient to their finances.

Cambon said loftily before the Belgians themselves: The Belgian war costs us hundreds of millions. Their ordinary revenues, and even some extraordinary taxes, will not answer to our reimbursements; and yet we have occasion for them. The mortgage of our assignats draws near its end. What must be done? Sell the Church property of Brabant. There is a mortgage of two thousand millions (eighty millions sterling). How shall we get possession of them? By an immediate union. Instantly they decreed this union. Men's minds were not disposed to it. What does it signify? Let us make them vote by means of money. Without delay, therefore, they secretly order the Minister of Foreign Affairs to dispose of four or five hundred thousand livres (20,000*l.* sterling) *to make the vagabonds of Brussels drunk, and to buy proselytes to the union in all the States.* But even these means, it was said, will obtain but a weak minority in our favor. What does that signify? *Revolutions*, said they, *are made only by minorities. It is the minority which has made the Revolution of France; it is a minority which has made the people triumph.*

The Belgic Provinces were not sufficient to satisfy the voracious cravings of this financial system. Cambon wanted to unite everything, that he might sell everything. Thus he forced the union of Savoy. In

the war with Holland, he saw nothing but gold to seize on, and assignats to sell at par.* "Do not let us dissemble," said he one day to the Committee of General Defence, in presence even of the patriot deputies of Holland, "you have no ecclesiastical goods to offer us for our indemnity. IT IS A REVOLUTION IN THEIR COUNTERS AND IRON CHESTS† that must be made amongst the Dutch." The word was said, and the bankers Abema and Van Staphorst understood it.

Do you think that that word has not been worth an army to the Stadtholder? that it has not cooled the ardor of the Dutch patriots? that it has not commanded the vigorous defence of Williamstadt?

Do you believe that the patriots of Amsterdam, when they read the preparatory decree which gave France an execution on their goods, — do you believe that those patriots would not have liked better to have remained under the government of the Stadtholder, who took from them no more than a fixed portion of their property, than to pass under that of a revolutionary power, which would make a complete revolution in their bureaus and strong-boxes, and reduce them to wretchedness and rags? ‡ Robbery

* The same thing will happen in Savoy. The persecution of the clergy has soured people's minds. The commissaries represent them to us as good Frenchmen. I put them to the proof. Where are the legions? How! thirty thousand Savoyards, — are they not armed to defend, in concert with us, their liberty? — Brissot.

† *Portefeuille* is the word in the original. It signifies all movable property which may be represented in bonds, notes, bills, stocks, or any sort of public or private securities. I do not know of a single word in English that answers it: I have therefore substituted that of *Iron Chests*, as coming nearest to the idea. — Translator.

‡ In the original *les réduire à la sansculotterie.*

and anarchy, instead of encouraging, will always stifle revolutions.

"But why," they object to me, "have not you and your friends chosen to expose these measures in the rostrum of the National Convention? Why have you not opposed yourself to all these fatal projects of union?"

There are two answers to make here, — one general, one particular.

You complain of the silence of honest men! You quite forget, then, honest men are the objects of your suspicion. Suspicion, if it does not stain the soul of a courageous man, at least arrests his thoughts in their passage to his lips. The suspicions of a good citizen freeze those men whom the calumny of the wicked could not stop in their progress.

You complain of their silence! You forget, then, that you have often established an insulting equality between them and men covered with crimes and made up of ignominy.

You forget, then, that you have twenty times left them covered with opprobrium by your galleries.

You forget, then, that you have not thought yourself sufficiently powerful to impose silence upon these galleries.

What ought a wise man to do in the midst of these circumstances? He is silent. He waits the moment when the passions give way; he waits till reason shall preside, and till the multitude shall listen to her voice.

What has been the tactic displayed during all these unions? Cambon, incapable of political calculation, boasting his ignorance in the diplomatic, flat-

tering the ignorant multitude, lending his name and popularity to the anarchists, seconded by their vociferations, denounced incessantly, as counter-revolutionists, those intelligent persons who were desirous at least of having things discussed. To oppose the acts of union appeared to Cambon an overt act of treason. The wish so much as to reflect and to deliberate was in his eyes a great crime. He calumniated our intentions. The voice of every deputy, especially my voice, would infallibly have been stifled. There were spies on the very monosyllables that escaped our lips.

A

# LETTER

TO

## WILLIAM ELLIOT, ESQ.,

OCCASIONED BY

THE ACCOUNT GIVEN IN A NEWSPAPER OF THE SPEECH MADE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS BY THE **** OF *******

IN THE DEBATE

CONCERNING LORD FITZWILLIAM.

1795.

# LETTER.

Beaconsfield, May 26, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been told of the voluntary which, for the entertainment of the House of Lords, has been lately played by his Grace the **** of *******, a great deal at my expense, and a little at his own. I confess I should have liked the composition rather better, if it had been quite new. But every man has his taste, and his Grace is an admirer of ancient music.

There may be sometimes too much even of a good thing. A toast is good, and a bumper is not bad: but the best toasts may be so often repeated as to disgust the palate, and ceaseless rounds of bumpers may nauseate and overload the stomach. The ears of the most steady-voting politicians may at last be stunned with "three times three." I am sure I have been very grateful for the flattering remembrance made of me in the toasts of the Revolution Society, and of other clubs formed on the same laudable plan. After giving the brimming honors to Citizen Thomas Paine and to Citizen Dr. Priestley, the gentlemen of these clubs seldom failed to bring me forth in my turn, and to drink, "Mr. Burke, and thanks to him for the discussion he has provoked."

I found myself elevated with this honor; for, even by the collision of resistance, to be the means of

striking out sparkles of truth, if not merit, is at least felicity.

Here I might have rested. But when I found that the great advocate, Mr. Erskine, condescended to resort to these bumper toasts, as the pure and exuberant fountains of politics and of rhetoric, (as I hear he did, in three or four speeches made in defence of certain worthy citizens,) I was rather let down a little. Though still somewhat proud of myself, I was not quite so proud of my voucher. Though he is no idolater of fame, in some way or other Mr. Erskine will always do himself honor. Methinks, however, in following the precedents of these toasts, he seemed to do more credit to his diligence as a special pleader than to his invention as an orator. To those who did not know the abundance of his resources, both of genius and erudition, there was something in it that indicated the want of a good assortment, with regard to richness and variety, in the magazine of topics and commonplaces which I suppose he keeps by him, in imitation of Cicero and other renowned declaimers of antiquity.

Mr. Erskine supplied something, I allow, from the stores of his imagination, in metamorphosing the jovial toasts of clubs into solemn special arguments at the bar. So far the thing showed talent: however, I must still prefer the bar of the tavern to the other bar. The toasts at the first hand were better than the arguments at the second. Even when the toasts began to grow old as sarcasms, they were washed down with still older pricked election Port; then the acid of the wine made some amends for the want of anything piquant in the wit. But when his Grace gave them a second transformation, and brought out

the vapid stuff which had wearied the clubs, and disgusted the courts, the drug made up of the bottoms of rejected bottles, all smelling so wofully of the cork and of the cask, and of everything except the honest old lamp, and when that sad draught had been farther infected with the jail pollution of the Old Bailey, and was dashed and brewed and ineffectually stummed again into a senatorial exordium in the House of Lords, I found all the high flavor and mantling of my honors tasteless, flat, and stale. Unluckily, the new tax on wine is felt even in the greatest fortunes, and his Grace submits to take up with the heel-taps of Mr. Erskine.

I have had the ill or good fortune to provoke two great men of this age to the publication of their opinions: I mean Citizen Thomas Paine, and his Grace the **** of *******. I am not so great a leveller as to put these two great men on a par, either in the state, or the republic of letters; but "the field of glory is a field for all." It is a large one, indeed; and we all may run, God knows where, in chase of glory, over the boundless expanse of that wild heath whose horizon always flies before us. I assure his Grace, (if he will yet give me leave to call him so,) whatever may be said on the authority of the clubs or of the bar, that Citizen Paine (who, they will have it, hunts with me in couples, and who only moves as I drag him along) has a sufficient activity in his own native benevolence to dispose and enable him to take the lead for himself. He is ready to blaspheme his God, to insult his king, and to libel the Constitution of his country, without any provocation from me or any encouragement from his Grace. I assure him that I shall not be guilty of the injustice of charging

Mr. Paine's next work against religion and human society upon his Grace's excellent speech in the House of Lords. I farther assure this noble Duke that I neither encouraged nor provoked that worthy citizen to seek for plenty, liberty, safety, justice, or lenity, in the famine, in the prisons, in the decrees of Convention, in the revolutionary tribunal, and in the guillotine of Paris, rather than quietly to take up with what he could find in the glutted markets, the unbarricadoed streets, the drowsy Old Bailey judges, or, at worst, the airy, wholesome pillory of Old England. The choice of country was his own taste. The writings were the effects of his own zeal. In spite of his friend Dr. Priestley, he was a free agent. I admit, indeed, that my praises of the British government, loaded with all its incumbrances, clogged with its peers and its beef, its parsons and its pudding, its commons and its beer, and its dull slavish liberty of going about just as one pleases, had something to provoke a jockey of Norfolk,* who was inspired with the resolute ambition of becoming a citizen of France, to do something which might render him worthy of naturalization in that grand asylum of persecuted merit, something which should entitle him to a place in the senate of the adoptive country of all the gallant, generous, and humane. This, I say, was possible. But the truth is, (with great deference to his Grace I say it,) Citizen Paine acted without any provocation at all; he acted solely from the native impulses of his own excellent heart.

His Grace, like an able orator, as he is, begins with giving me a great deal of praise for talents which I do not possess. He does this to entitle himself, on the

* Mr. Paine is a Norfolk man, from Thetford.

credit of this gratuitous kindness, to exaggerate my abuse of the parts which his bounty, and not that of Nature, has bestowed upon me. In this, too, he has condescended to copy Mr. Erskine. These priests (I hope they will excuse me, I mean priests of the Rights of Man) begin by crowning me with their flowers and their fillets, and bedewing me with their odors, as a preface to their knocking me on the head with their consecrated axes. I have injured, say they, the Constitution; and I have abandoned the Whig party and the Whig principles that I professed. I do not mean, my dear Sir, to defend myself against his Grace. I have not much interest in what the world shall think or say of me; as little has the world an interest in what I shall think or say of any one in it; and I wish that his Grace had suffered an unhappy man to enjoy, in his retreat, the melancholy privileges of obscurity and sorrow. At any rate, I have spoken and I have written on the subject. If I have written or spoken so poorly as to be quite forgot, a fresh apology will not make a more lasting impression. "I must let the tree lie as it falls." Perhaps I must take some shame to myself. I confess that I have acted on my own principles of government, and not on those of his Grace, which are, I dare say, profound and wise, but which I do not pretend to understand. As to the party to which he alludes, and which has long taken its leave of me, I believe the principles of the book which he condemns are very conformable to the opinions of many of the most considerable and most grave in that description of politicians. A few, indeed, who, I admit, are equally respectable in all points, differ from me, and talk his Grace's language. I am too feeble to con-

tend with them. They have the field to themselves. There are others, very young and very ingenious persons, who form, probably, the largest part of what his Grace, I believe, is pleased to consider as that party. Some of them were not born into the world, and all of them were children, when I entered into that connection. I give due credit to the censorial brow, to the broad phylacteries, and to the imposing gravity of those magisterial rabbins and doctors in the cabala of political science. I admit that "wisdom is as the gray hair to man, and that learning is like honorable old age." But, at a time when liberty is a good deal talked of, perhaps I might be excused, if I caught something of the general indocility. It might not be surprising, if I lengthened my chain a link or two, and, in an age of relaxed discipline, gave a trifling indulgence to my own notions. If that could be allowed, perhaps I might sometimes (by accident, and without an unpardonable crime) trust as much to my own very careful and very laborious, though perhaps somewhat purblind disquisitions, as to their soaring, intuitive, eagle-eyed authority. But the modern liberty is a precious thing. It must not be profaned by too vulgar an use. It belongs only to the chosen few, who are born to the hereditary representation of the whole democracy, and who leave nothing at all, no, not the offal, to us poor outcasts of the plebeian race.

Amongst those gentlemen who came to authority as soon or sooner than they came of age I do not mean to include his Grace. With all those native titles to empire over our minds which distinguish the others, he has a large share of experience. He certainly ought to understand the British Constitution

better than I do. He has studied it in the fundamental part. For one election I have seen, he has been concerned in twenty. Nobody is less of a visionary theorist; nobody has drawn his speculations more from practice. No peer has condescended to superintend with more vigilance the declining franchises of the poor commons. "With thrice great Hermes he has outwatched the Bear." Often have his candles been burned to the snuff, and glimmered and stunk in the sockets, whilst he grew pale at his constitutional studies; long, sleepless nights has he wasted, long, laborious, shiftless journeys has he made, and great sums has he expended, in order to secure the purity, the independence, and the sobriety of elections, and to give a check, if possible, to the ruinous charges that go nearly to the destruction of the right of election itself.

Amidst these his labors, his Grace will be pleased to forgive me, if my zeal, less enlightened, to be sure, than his by midnight lamps and studies, has presumed to talk too favorably of this Constitution, and even to say something sounding like approbation of that body which has the honor to reckon his Grace at the head of it. Those who dislike this partiality, or, if his Grace pleases, this flattery of mine, have a comfort at hand. I may be refuted and brought to shame by the most convincing of all refutations, a practical refutation. Every individual peer for himself may show that I was ridiculously wrong; the whole body of those noble persons may refute me for the whole corps. If they please, they are more powerful advocates against themselves than a thousand scribblers like me can be in their favor. If I were even possessed of those powers which his Grace, in order to

heighten my offence, is pleased to attribute to me, there would be little difference. The eloquence of Mr. Erskine might save Mr. ***** from the gallows, but no eloquence could save Mr. Jackson from the effects of his own potion.

In that unfortunate book of mine, which is put in the *Index Expurgatorius* of the modern Whigs, I might have spoken too favorably not only of those who wear coronets, but of those who wear crowns. Kings, however, have not only long arms, but strong ones too. A great Northern potentate, for instance, is able in one moment, and with one bold stroke of his diplomatic pen, to efface all the volumes which I could write in a century, or which the most laborious publicists of Germany ever carried to the fair of Leipsic, as an apology for monarchs and monarchy. Whilst I, or any other poor, puny, private sophist, was defending the Declaration of Pilnitz, his Majesty might refute me by the Treaty of Basle. Such a monarch may destroy one republic because it had a king at its head, and he may balance this extraordinary act by founding another republic that has cut off the head of its king. I defended that great potentate for associating in a grand alliance for the preservation of the old governments of Europe; but he puts me to silence by delivering up all those governments (his own virtually included) to the new system of France. If he is accused before the Parisian tribunal (constituted for the trial of kings) for having polluted the soil of liberty by the tracks of his disciplined slaves, he clears himself by surrendering the finest parts of Germany (with a handsome cut of his own territories) to the offended majesty of the regicides of France. Can I resist this? Am I responsible for

it, if, with a torch in his hand, and a rope about his neck, he makes *amende honorable* to the *sans-culotterie* of the Republic one and indivisible? In that humiliating attitude, in spite of my protests, he may supplicate pardon for his menacing proclamations, and, as an expiation to those whom he failed to terrify with his threats, he may abandon those whom he had seduced by his promises. He may sacrifice the royalists of France, whom he had called to his standard, as a salutary example to those who shall adhere to their native sovereign, or shall confide in any other who undertakes the cause of oppressed kings and of loyal subjects.

How can I help it, if this high-minded prince will subscribe to the invectives which the regicides have made against all kings, and particularly against himself? How can I help it, if this royal propagandist will preach the doctrine of the Rights of Men? Is it my fault, if his professors of literature read lectures on that code in all his academies, and if all the pensioned managers of the newspapers in his dominions diffuse it throughout Europe in an hundred journals? Can it be attributed to me, if he will initiate all his grenadiers and all his hussars in these high mysteries? Am I responsible, if he will make *Le Droit de l'Homme*, or *La Souveraineté du Peuple* the favorite parole of his military orders? Now that his troops are to act with the brave legions of freedom, no doubt he will fit them for their fraternity. He will teach the Prussians to think, to feel, and to act like them, and to emulate the glories of the *régiment de l'échafaud*. He will employ the illustrious Citizen Santerre, the general of his new allies, to instruct the dull Germans how they shall conduct themselves towards

persons who, like Louis the Sixteenth, (whose cause and person he once took into his protection,) shall dare, without the sanction of the people, or with it, to consider themselves as hereditary kings. Can I arrest this great potentate in his career of glory? Am I blamable in recommending virtue and religion as the true foundation of all monarchies, because the protector of the three religions of the Westphalian arrangement, to ingratiate himself with the Republic of Philosophy, shall abolish all the three? It is not in my power to prevent the grand patron of the Reformed Church, if he chooses it, from annulling the Calvinistic sabbath, and establishing the *décadi* of atheism in all his states. He may even renounce and abjure his favorite mysticism in the Temple of Reason. In these things, at least, he is truly despotic. He has now shaken hands with everything which at first had inspired him with horror. It would be curious indeed to see (what I shall not, however, travel so far to see) the ingenious devices and the elegant transparencies which, on the restoration of peace and the commencement of Prussian liberty, are to decorate Potsdam and Charlottenburg *festeggianti*. What shades of his armed ancestors of the House of Brandenburg will the committee of *Illuminés* raise up in the opera-house of Berlin, to dance a grand ballet in the rejoicings for this auspicious event? Is it a grand master of the Teutonic order, or is it the great Elector? Is it the first king of Prussia, or the last? or is the whole long line (long, I mean, *a parte ante*) to appear like Banquo's royal procession in the tragedy of Macbeth?

How can I prevent all these arts of royal policy, and all these displays of royal magnificence? How

can I prevent the successor of Frederick the Great from aspiring to a new, and, in this age, unexampled kind of glory? Is it in my power to say that he shall not make his confessions in the style of St. Austin or of Rousseau? that he shall not assume the character of the penitent and flagellant, and, grafting monkery on philosophy, strip himself of his regal purple, clothe his gigantic limbs in the sackcloth and the *hair-shirt*, and exercise on his broad shoulders the disciplinary scourge of the holy order of the *Sans-Culottes?* It is not in me to hinder kings from making new orders of religious and martial knighthood. I am not Hercules enough to uphold those orbs which the Atlases of the world are so desirous of shifting from their weary shoulders. What can be done against the magnanimous resolution of the great to accomplish the degradation and the ruin of their own character and situation?

What I say of the German princes, that I say of all the other dignities and all the other institutions of the Holy Roman Empire. If they have a mind to destroy themselves, they may put their advocates to silence and their advisers to shame. I have often praised the Aulic Council. It is very true, I did so. I thought it a tribunal as well formed as human wisdom could form a tribunal for coercing the great, the rich, and the powerful, — for obliging them to submit their necks to the imperial laws, and to those of Nature and of nations: a tribunal well conceived for extirpating peculation, corruption, and oppression from all the parts of that vast, heterogeneous mass, called the Germanic body. I should not be inclined to retract these praises upon any of the ordinary lapses into which human infirmity will fall;

they might still stand, though some of their *conclusums* should taste of the prejudices of country or of faction, whether political or religious. Some degree even of corruption should not make me think them guilty of suicide; but if we could suppose that the Aulic Council, not regarding duty or even common decorum, listening neither to the secret admonitions of conscience nor to the public voice of fame, some of the members basely abandoning their post, and others continuing in it only the more infamously to betray it, should give a judgment so shameless and so prostitute, of such monstrous and even portentous corruption, that no example in the history of human depravity, or even in the fictions of poetic imagination, could possibly match it, — if it should be a judgment which, with cold, unfeeling cruelty, after long deliberations, should condemn millions of innocent people to extortion, to rapine, and to blood, and should devote some of the finest countries upon earth to ravage and desolation, — does any one think that any servile apologies of mine, or any strutting and bullying insolence of their own, can save them from the ruin that must fall on all institutions of dignity or of authority that are perverted from their purport to the oppression of human nature in others and to its disgrace in themselves? As the wisdom of men makes such institutions, the folly of men destroys them. Whatever we may pretend, there is always more in the soundness of the materials than in the fashion of the work. The order of a good building is something. But if it be wholly declined from its perpendicular, if the cement is loose and incoherent, if the stones are scaling with every change of the weather, and the whole toppling on our heads, what

matter is it whether we are crushed by a Corinthian or a Doric ruin? The fine form of a vessel is a matter of use and of delight. It is pleasant to see her decorated with cost and art. But what signifies even the mathematical truth of her form, — what signify all the art and cost with which she can be carved, and painted, and gilded, and covered with decorations from stem to stern, — what signify all her rigging and sails, her flags, her pendants, and her streamers, — what signify even her cannon, her stores, and her provisions, if all her planks and timbers be unsound and rotten?

> Quamvis Pontica pinus,
> Silvæ filia nobilis,
> Jactes et genus et nomen inutile.

I have been stimulated, I know not how, to give you this trouble by what very few except myself would think worth any trouble at all. In a speech in the House of Lords, I have been attacked for the defence of a scheme of government in which that body inheres, and in which alone it can exist. Peers of Great Britain may become as penitent as the sovereign of Prussia. They may repent of what they have done in assertion of the honor of their king, and in favor of their own safety. But never the gloom that lowers over the fortune of the cause, nor anything which the great may do towards hastening their own fall, can make me repent of what I have done by pen or voice (the only arms I possess) in favor of the order of things into which I was born and in which I fondly hoped to die.

In the long series of ages which have furnished the matter of history, never was so beautiful and so august a spectacle presented to the moral eye as Eu-

rope afforded the day before the Revolution in France. I knew, indeed, that this prosperity contained in itself the seeds of its own danger. In one part of the society it caused laxity and debility; in the other it produced bold spirits and dark designs. A false philosophy passed from academies into courts; and the great themselves were infected with the theories which conducted to their ruin. Knowledge, which in the two last centuries either did not exist at all, or existed solidly on right principles and in chosen hands, was now diffused, weakened, and perverted. General wealth loosened morals, relaxed vigilance, and increased presumption. Men of talent began to compare, in the partition of the common stock of public prosperity, the proportions of the dividends with the merits of the claimants. As usual, they found their portion not equal to their estimate (or perhaps to the public estimate) of their own worth. When it was once discovered by the Revolution in France that a struggle between establishment and rapacity could be maintained, though but for one year and in one place, I was sure that a practicable breach was made in the whole order of things, and in every country. Religion, that held the materials of the fabric together, was first systematically loosened. All other opinions, under the name of prejudices, must fall along with it; and property, left undefended by principles, became a repository of spoils to tempt cupidity, and not a magazine to furnish arms for defence. I knew, that, attacked on all sides by the infernal energies of talents set in action by vice and disorder, authority could not stand upon authority alone. It wanted some other support than the poise of its own gravity. Situations formerly

supported persons. It now became necessary that personal qualities should support situations. Formerly, where authority was found, wisdom and virtue were presumed. But now the veil was torn, and, to keep off sacrilegious intrusion, it was necessary that in the sanctuary of government something should be disclosed not only venerable, but dreadful. Government was at once to show itself full of virtue and full of force. It was to invite partisans, by making it appear to the world that a generous cause was to be asserted, one fit for a generous people to engage in. From passive submission was it to expect resolute defence? No! It must have warm advocates and passionate defenders, which an heavy, discontented acquiescence never could produce. What a base and foolish thing is it for any consolidated body of authority to say, or to act as if it said, "I will put my trust, not in my own virtue, but in your patience; I will indulge in effeminacy, in indolence, in corruption; I will give way to all my perverse and vicious humors, because you cannot punish me without the hazard of ruining yourselves."

I wished to warn the people against the greatest of all evils, — a blind and furious spirit of innovation, under the name of reform. I was, indeed, well aware that power rarely reforms itself. So it is, undoubtedly, when all is quiet about it. But I was in hopes that provident fear might prevent fruitless penitence. I trusted that danger might produce at least circumspection. I flattered myself, in a moment like this, that nothing would be added to make authority top-heavy, — that the very moment of an earthquake would not be the time chosen for adding a story to our houses. I hoped to see the surest of all

reforms, perhaps the only sure reform, — the ceasing to do ill. In the mean time I wished to the people the wisdom of knowing how to tolerate a condition which none of their efforts can render much more than tolerable. It was a condition, however, in which everything was to be found that could enable them to live to Nature, and, if so they pleased, to live to virtue and to honor.

I do not repent that I thought better of those to whom I wished well than they will suffer me long to think that they deserved. Far from repenting, I would to God that new faculties had been called up in me, in favor not of this or that man, or this or that system, but of the general, vital principle, that, whilst it was in its vigor, produced the state of things transmitted to us from our fathers, but which, through the joint operation of the abuses of authority and liberty, may perish in our hands. [I am not of opinion that the race of men, and the commonwealths they create, like the bodies of individuals, grow effete and languid and bloodless, and ossify, by the necessities of their own conformation, and the fatal operation of longevity and time. These analogies between bodies natural and politic, though they may sometimes illustrate arguments, furnish no argument of themselves. They are but too often used, under the color of a specious philosophy, to find apologies for the despair of laziness and pusillanimity, and to excuse the want of all manly efforts, when the exigencies of our country call for them the more loudly. ]

How often has public calamity been arrested on the very brink of ruin by the seasonable energy of a single man! Have we no such man amongst us? I am as sure as I am of my being, that one vigorous

mind, without office, without situation, without public functions of any kind, (at a time when the want of such a thing is felt, as I am sure it is,) I say, one such man, confiding in the aid of God, and full of just reliance in his own fortitude, vigor, enterprise, and perseverance, would first draw to him some few like himself, and then that multitudes, hardly thought to be in existence, would appear and troop about him.

If I saw this auspicious beginning, baffled and frustrated as I am, yet on the very verge of a timely grave, abandoned abroad and desolate at home, stripped of my boast, my hope, my consolation, my helper, my counsellor, and my guide, (you know in part what I have lost, and would to God I could clear myself of all neglect and fault in that loss,) yet thus, even thus, I would rake up the fire under all the ashes that oppress it. I am no longer patient of the public eye; nor am I of force to win my way and to justle and elbow in a crowd. But, even in solitude, something may be done for society. The meditations of the closet have infected senates with a subtle frenzy, and inflamed armies with the brands of the Furies. The cure might come from the same source with the distemper. I would add my part to those who would animate the people (whose hearts are yet right) to new exertions in the old cause.

Novelty is not the only source of zeal. Why should not a Maccabæus and his brethren arise to assert the honor of the ancient law and to defend the temple of their forefathers with as ardent a spirit as can inspire any innovator to destroy the monuments of the piety and the glory of ancient ages? It is not a hazarded assertion, it is a great truth, that, when

once things are gone out of their ordinary course, it is by acts out of the ordinary course they can alone be reëstablished. Republican spirit can only be combated by a spirit of the same nature, — of the same nature, but informed with another principle, and pointing to another end. I would persuade a resistance both to the corruption and to the reformation that prevails. It will not be the weaker, but much the stronger, for combating both together. A victory over real corruptions would enable us to baffle the spurious and pretended reformations. I would not wish to excite, or even to tolerate, that kind of evil spirit which evokes the powers of hell to rectify the disorders of the earth. No! I would add my voice with better, and, I trust, more potent charms, to draw down justice and wisdom and fortitude from heaven, for the correction of human vice, and the recalling of human error from the devious ways into which it has been betrayed. I would wish to call the impulses of individuals at once to the aid and to the control of authority. By this, which I call the true republican spirit, paradoxical as it may appear, monarchies alone can be rescued from the imbecility of courts and the madness of the crowd. This republican spirit would not suffer men in high place to bring ruin on their country and on themselves. It would reform, not by destroying, but by saving, the great, the rich, and the powerful. Such a republican spirit we perhaps fondly conceive to have animated the distinguished heroes and patriots of old, who knew no mode of policy but religion and virtue. These they would have paramount to all constitutions; they would not suffer monarchs, or senates, or popular assemblies, under pretences of dignity

or authority or freedom, to shake off those moral riders which reason has appointed to govern every sort of rude power. These, in appearance loading them by their weight, do by that pressure augment their essential force. The momentum is increased by the extraneous weight. It is true in moral as it is in mechanical science. It is true, not only in the draught, but in the race. These riders of the great, in effect, hold the reins which guide them in their course, and wear the spur that stimulates them to the goals of honor and of safety. The great must submit to the dominion of prudence and of virtue, or none will long submit to the dominion of the great. *Dis te minorem quod geris, imperas.* This is the feudal tenure which they cannot alter.

Indeed, my dear Sir, things are in a bad state. I do not deny a good share of diligence, a very great share of ability, and much public virtue to those who direct our affairs. But they are incumbered, not aided, by their very instruments, and by all the apparatus of the state. I think that our ministry (though there are things against them which neither you nor I can dissemble, and which grieve me to the heart) is by far the most honest and by far the wisest system of administration in Europe. Their fall would be no trivial calamity.

Not meaning to depreciate the minority in Parliament, whose talents are also great, and to whom I do not deny virtues, their system seems to me to be fundamentally wrong. But whether wrong or right, they have not enough of coherence among themselves, nor of estimation with the public, nor of numbers. They cannot make up an administration. Nothing is more visible. Many other things are

against them, which I do not charge as faults, but reckon among national misfortunes. Extraordinary things must be done, or one of the parties cannot stand as a ministry, nor the other even as an opposition. They cannot change their situations, nor can any useful coalition be made between them. I do not see the mode of it nor the way to it. This aspect of things I do not contemplate with pleasure.

I well know that everything of the daring kind which I speak of is critical: but the times are critical. New things in a new world! I see no hopes in the common tracks. If men are not to be found who can be got to feel within them some impulse, *quod nequeo monstrare, et sentio tantum*, and which makes them impatient of the present, — if none can be got to feel that private persons may sometimes assume that sort of magistracy which does not depend on the nomination of kings or the election of the people, but has an inherent and self-existent power which both would recognize, I see nothing in the world to hope.

If I saw such a group beginning to cluster, such as they are, they should have (all that I can give) my prayers and my advice. People talk of war or cry for peace: have they to the bottom considered the questions either of war or peace, upon the scale of the existing world? No, I fear they have not.

Why should not you yourself be one of those to enter your name in such a list as I speak of? You are young; you have great talents; you have a clear head; you have a natural, fluent, and unforced elocution; your ideas are just, your sentiments benevolent, open, and enlarged; — but this is too big for your modesty. Oh! this modesty, in time and place,

is a charming virtue, and the grace of all other virtues. But it is sometimes the worst enemy they have. Let him whose print I gave you the other day be engraved in your memory! Had it pleased Providence to have spared him for the trying situations that seem to be coming on, notwithstanding that he was sometimes a little dispirited by the disposition which we thought shown to depress him and set him aside, yet he was always buoyed up again; and on one or two occasions he discovered what might be expected from the vigor and elevation of his mind, from his unconquerable fortitude, and from the extent of his resources for every purpose of speculation and of action. Remember him, my friend, who in the highest degree honored and respected you; and remember that great parts are a great trust. Remember, too, that mistaken or misapplied virtues, if they are not as pernicious as vice, frustrate at least their own natural tendencies, and disappoint the purposes of the Great Giver.

Adieu. My dreams are finished.

# THOUGHTS AND DETAILS

ON

# SCARCITY.

ORIGINALLY PRESENTED

TO THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT,

IN THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER.

1795.

# THOUGHTS AND DETAILS

ON

# SCARCITY.

OF all things, an indiscreet tampering with the trade of provisions is the most dangerous, and it is always worst in the time when men are most disposed to it, — that is, in the time of scarcity; because there is nothing on which the passions of men are so violent, and their judgment so weak, and on which there exists such a multitude of ill-founded popular prejudices.

The great use of government is as a restraint; and there is no restraint which it ought to put upon others, and upon itself too, rather than that which is imposed on the fury of speculating under circumstances of irritation. The number of idle tales spread about by the industry of faction and by the zeal of foolish good-intention, and greedily devoured by the malignant credulity of mankind, tends infinitely to aggravate prejudices which in themselves are more than sufficiently strong. In that state of affairs, and of the public with relation to them, the first thing that government owes to us, the people, is *information;* the next is timely coercion: the one to guide our judgment; the other to regulate our tempers.

To provide for us in our necessities is not in the power of government. It would be a vain presump-

tion in statesmen to think they can do it. The people maintain them, and not they the people. It is in the power of government to prevent much evil; it can do very little positive good in this, or perhaps in anything else. It is not only so of the state and statesman, but of all the classes and descriptions of the rich: they are the pensioners of the poor, and are maintained by their superfluity. They are under an absolute, hereditary, and indefeasible dependence on those who labor and are miscalled the poor.

The laboring people are only poor because they are numerous. Numbers in their nature imply poverty. In a fair distribution among a vast multitude none can have much. That class of dependent pensioners called the rich is so extremely small, that, if all their throats were cut, and a distribution made of all they consume in a year, it would not give a bit of bread and cheese for one night's supper to those who labor, and who in reality feed both the pensioners and themselves.

But the throats of the rich ought not to be cut, nor their magazines plundered; because, in their persons, they are trustees for those who labor, and their hoards are the banking-houses of these latter. Whether they mean it or not, they do, in effect, execute their trust, — some with more, some with less fidelity and judgment. But, on the whole, the duty is performed, and everything returns, deducting some very trifling commission and discount, to the place from whence it arose. When the poor rise to destroy the rich, they act as wisely for their own purposes as when they burn mills and throw corn into the river to make bread cheap.

When I say that we of the people ought to be in-

formed, inclusively I say we ought not to be flattered: flattery is the reverse of instruction. The *poor* in that case would be rendered as improvident as the rich, which would not be at all good for them.

Nothing can be so base and so wicked as the political canting language, "the laboring *poor*." Let compassion be shown in action, — the more, the better, — according to every man's ability; but let there be no lamentation of their condition. It is no relief to their miserable circumstances; it is only an insult to their miserable understandings. It arises from a total want of charity or a total want of thought. Want of one kind was never relieved by want of any other kind. Patience, labor, sobriety, frugality, and religion should be recommended to them; all the rest is downright *fraud*. It is horrible to call them "the *once happy* laborer."

Whether what may be called the moral or philosophical happiness of the laborious classes is increased or not, I cannot say. The seat of that species of happiness is in the mind; and there are few data to ascertain the comparative state of the mind at any two periods. Philosophical happiness is to want little. Civil or vulgar happiness is to want much and to enjoy much.

If the happiness of the animal man (which certainly goes somewhere towards the happiness of the rational man) be the object of our estimate, then I assert, without the least hesitation, that the condition of those who labor (in all descriptions of labor, and in all gradations of labor, from the highest to the lowest inclusively) is, on the whole, extremely meliorated, if more and better food is any standard of melioration. They work more, it is certain; but

they have the advantage of their augmented labor: yet whether that increase of labor be on the whole a *good* or an *evil* is a consideration that would lead us a great way, and is not for my present purpose. But as to the fact of the melioration of their diet, I shall enter into the detail of proof, whenever I am called upon: in the mean time, the known difficulty of contenting them with anything but bread made of the finest flour and meat of the first quality is proof sufficient.

I further assert, that, even under all the hardships of the last year, the laboring people did, either out of their direct gains, or from charity, (which it seems is now an insult to them,) in fact, fare better than they did in seasons of common plenty, fifty or sixty years ago, — or even at the period of my English observation, which is about forty-four years. I even assert that full as many in that class as ever were known to do it before continued to save money; and this I can prove, so far as my own information and experience extend.

It is not true that the rate of wages has not increased with the nominal price of provisions. I allow, it has not fluctuated with that price, — nor ought it; and the squires of Norfolk had dined, when they gave it as their opinion that it might or ought to rise and fall with the market of provisions. The rate of wages, in truth, has no *direct* relation to that price. Labor is a commodity like every other, and rises or falls according to the demand. This is in the nature of things; however, the nature of things has provided for their necessities. Wages have been twice raised in my time; and they bear a full proportion, or even a greater than formerly, to the medium of provision

during the last bad cycle of twenty years. They bear a full proportion to the result of their labor. If we were wildly to attempt to force them beyond it, the stone which we had forced up the hill would only fall back upon them in a diminished demand, or, what indeed is the far lesser evil, an aggravated price of all the provisions which are the result of their manual toil.

There is an implied contract, much stronger than any instrument or article of agreement between the laborer in any occupation and his employer, — that the labor, so far as that labor is concerned, shall be sufficient to pay to the employer a profit on his capital and a compensation for his risk: in a word, that the labor shall produce an advantage equal to the payment. Whatever is above that is a direct *tax;* and if the amount of that tax be left to the will and pleasure of another, it is an *arbitrary tax.*

If I understand it rightly, the tax proposed on the farming interest of this kingdom is to be levied at what is called the discretion of justices of peace.

The questions arising on this scheme of arbitrary taxation are these: Whether it is better to leave all dealing, in which there is no force or fraud, collusion or combination, entirely to the persons mutually concerned in the matter contracted for, — or to put the contract into the hands of those who can have none or a very remote interest in it, and little or no knowledge of the subject.

It might be imagined that there would be very little difficulty in solving this question: for what man, of any degree of reflection, can think that a want of interest in any subject, closely connected with a want of skill in it, qualifies a person to intermeddle in any

the least affair, — much less in affairs that vitally concern the agriculture of the kingdom, the first of all its concerns, and the foundation of all its prosperity in every other matter by which that prosperity is produced?

The vulgar error on this subject arises from a total confusion in the very idea of things widely different in themselves, — those of convention, and those of judicature. When a contract is making, it is a matter of discretion and of interest between the parties. In that intercourse, and in what is to arise from it, the parties are the masters. If they are not completely so, they are not free, and therefore their contracts are void.

But this freedom has no farther extent, when the contract is made: then their discretionary powers expire, and a new order of things takes its origin. Then, and not till then, and on a difference between the parties, the office of the judge commences. He cannot dictate the contract. It is his business to see that it be *enforced*, — provided that it is not contrary to preëxisting laws, or obtained by force or fraud. If he is in any way a maker or regulator of the contract, in so much he is disqualified from being a judge. But this sort of confused distribution of administrative and judicial characters (of which we have already as much as is sufficient, and a little more) is not the only perplexity of notions and passions which trouble us in the present hour.

What is doing supposes, or pretends, that the farmer and the laborer have opposite interests, — that the farmer oppresses the laborer, — and that a gentleman, called a justice of peace, is the protector of the latter, and a control and restraint on the former;

and this is a point I wish to examine in a manner a good deal different from that in which gentlemen proceed, who confide more in their abilities than is fit, and suppose them capable of more than any natural abilities, fed with no other than the provender furnished by their own private speculations, can accomplish. Legislative acts attempting to regulate this part of economy do, at least as much as any other, require the exactest detail of circumstances, guided by the surest general principles that are necessary to direct experiment and inquiry, in order again from those details to elicit principles, firm and luminous general principles, to direct a practical legislative proceeding.

First, then, I deny that it is in this case, as in any other, of necessary implication that contracting parties should originally have had different interests. By accident it may be so, undoubtedly, at the outset: but then the contract is of the nature of a compromise; and compromise is founded on circumstances that suppose it the interest of the parties to be reconciled in some medium. The principle of compromise adopted, of consequence the interests cease to be different.

But in the case of the farmer and the laborer, their interests are always the same, and it is absolutely impossible that their free contracts can be onerous to either party. It is the interest of the farmer that his work should be done with effect and celerity; and that cannot be, unless the laborer is well fed, and otherwise found with such necessaries of animal life, according to its habitudes, as may keep the body in full force, and the mind gay and cheerful For of all the instruments of his trade,

the labor of man (what the ancient writers have called the *instrumentum vocale*) is that on which he is most to rely for the repayment of his capital. The other two, the *semivocale* in the ancient classification, that is, the working stock of cattle, and the *instrumentum mutum*, such as carts, ploughs, spades, and so forth, though not all inconsiderable in themselves, are very much inferior in utility or in expense, and, without a given portion of the first, are nothing at all. For, in all things whatever, the mind is the most valuable and the most important; and in this scale the whole of agriculture is in a natural and just order: the beast is as an informing principle to the plough and cart; the laborer is as reason to the beast; and the farmer is as a thinking and presiding principle to the laborer. An attempt to break this chain of subordination in any part is equally absurd; but the absurdity is the most mischievous, in practical operation, where it is the most easy, — that is, where it is the most subject to an erroneous judgment.

It is plainly more the farmer's interest that his men should thrive than that his horses should be well fed, sleek, plump, and fit for use, or than that his wagon and ploughs should be strong, in good repair, and fit for service.

On the other hand, if the farmer ceases to profit of the laborer, and that his capital is not continually manured and fructified, it is impossible that he should continue that abundant nutriment and clothing and lodging proper for the protection of the instruments he employs.

It is therefore the first and fundamental interest of the laborer, that the farmer should have a full incom-

ing profit on the product of his labor. The proposition is self-evident; and nothing but the malignity, perverseness, and ill-governed passions of mankind, and particularly the envy they bear to each other's prosperity, could prevent their seeing and acknowledging it, with thankfulness to the benign and wise Disposer of all things, who obliges men, whether they will or not, in pursuing their own selfish interests, to connect the general good with their own individual success.

But who are to judge what that profit and advantage ought to be? Certainly no authority on earth. It is a matter of convention, dictated by the reciprocal conveniences of the parties, and indeed by their reciprocal necessities. — But if the farmer is excessively avaricious? — Why, so much the better: the more he desires to increase his gains, the more interested is he in the good condition of those upon whose labor his gains must principally depend.

I shall be told by the zealots of the sect of regulation, that this may be true, and may be safely committed to the convention of the farmer and the laborer, when the latter is in the prime of his youth, and at the time of his health and vigor, and in ordinary times of abundance. But in calamitous seasons, under accidental illness, in declining life, and with the pressure of a numerous offspring, the future nourishers of the community, but the present drains and blood-suckers of those who produce them, what is to be done? When a man cannot live and maintain his family by the natural hire of his labor, ought it not to be raised by authority?

On this head I must be allowed to submit what my opinions have ever been, and somewhat at large.

And, first, I premise that labor is, as I have already intimated, a commodity, and, as such, an article of trade. If I am right in this notion, then labor must be subject to all the laws and principles of trade, and not to regulations foreign to them, and that may be totally inconsistent with those principles and those laws. When any commodity is carried to market, it is not the necessity of the vendor, but the necessity of the purchaser, that raises the price. The extreme want of the seller has rather (by the nature of things with which we shall in vain contend) the direct contrary operation. If the goods at market are beyond the demand, they fall in their value; if below it, they rise. The impossibility of the subsistence of a man who carries his labor to a market is totally beside the question, in this way of viewing it. The only question is, What is it worth to the buyer?

But if authority comes in and forces the buyer to a price, what is this in the case (say) of a farmer who buys the labor of ten or twelve laboring men, and three or four handicrafts, — what is it but to make an arbitrary division of his property among them?

The whole of his gains (I say it with the most certain conviction) never do amount anything like in value to what he pays to his laborers and artificers; so that a very small advance upon what *one* man pays to *many* may absorb the whole of what he possesses, and amount to an actual partition of all his substance among them. A perfect equality will, indeed, be produced, — that is to say, equal want, equal wretchedness, equal beggary, and, on the part of the partitioners, a woful, helpless, and desperate disappointment. Such is the event of all compulsory equalizations. They pull down what is above; they never raise

what is below; and they depress high and low together beneath the level of what was originally the lowest.

If a commodity is raised by authority above what it will yield with a profit to the buyer, that commodity will be the less dealt in. If a second blundering interposition be used to correct the blunder of the first and an attempt is made to force the purchase of the commodity, (of labor, for instance,) the one of these two things must happen: either that the forced buyer is ruined, or the price of the product of the labor in that proportion is raised. Then the wheel turns round, and the evil complained of falls with aggravated weight on the complainant. The price of corn, which is the result of the expense of all the operations of husbandry taken together, and for some time continued, will rise on the laborer, considered as a consumer. The very best will be, that he remains where he was. But if the price of the corn should not compensate the price of labor, what is far more to be feared, the most serious evil, the very destruction of agriculture itself, is to be apprehended.

Nothing is such an enemy to accuracy of judgment as a coarse discrimination, a want of such classification and distribution as the subject admits of. Increase the rate of wages to the laborer, say the regulators, — as if labor was but one thing, and of one value. But this very broad, generic term, *labor*, admits, at least, of two or three specific descriptions: and these will suffice, at least, to let gentlemen discern a little the necessity of proceeding with caution in their coercive guidance of those whose existence depends upon the observance of still nicer distinctions and subdivisions than commonly they resort

to in forming their judgments on this very enlarged part of economy.

The laborers in husbandry may be divided, —

First, Into those who are able to perform the full work of a man, — that is, what can be done by a person from twenty-one years of age to fifty. I know no husbandry work (mowing hardly excepted) that is not equally within the power of all persons within those ages, the more advanced fully compensating by knack and habit what they lose in activity. Unquestionably, there is a good deal of difference between the value of one man's labor and that of another, from strength, dexterity, and honest application. But I am quite sure, from my best observation, that any given five men will, in their total, afford a proportion of labor equal to any other five within the periods of life I have stated: that is, that among such five men there will be one possessing all the qualifications of a good workman, one bad, and the other three middling, and approximating to the first and the last. So that, in so small a platoon as that of even five, you will find the full complement of all that five men *can* earn. Taking five and five throughout the kingdom, they are equal: therefore an error with regard to the equalization of their wages by those who employ five, as farmers do at the very least, cannot be considerable.

Secondly, Those who are able to work, but not the complete task of a day-laborer. This class is infinitely diversified, but will aptly enough fall into principal divisions. *Men*, from the decline, which after fifty becomes every year more sensible, to the period of debility and decrepitude, and the maladies that precede a final dissolution. *Women*, whose em-

ployment on husbandry is but occasional, and who differ more in effective labor one from another than men do, on account of gestation, nursing, and domestic management, over and above the difference they have in common with men in advancing, in stationary, and in declining life. *Children*, who proceed on the reverse order, growing from less to greater utility, but with a still greater disproportion of nutriment to labor than is found in the second of these subdivisions: as is visible to those who will give themselves the trouble of examining into the interior economy of a poor-house.

This inferior classification is introduced to show that laws prescribing or magistrates exercising a very stiff and often inapplicable rule, or a blind and rash discretion, never can provide the just proportions between earning and salary, on the one hand, and nutriment on the other: whereas interest, habit, and the tacit convention that arise from a thousand nameless circumstances produce a *tact* that regulates without difficulty what laws and magistrates cannot regulate at all. The first class of labor wants nothing to equalize it; it equalizes itself. The second and third are not capable of any equalization.

But what if the rate of hire to the laborer comes far short of his necessary subsistence, and the calamity of the time is so great as to threaten actual famine? Is the poor laborer to be abandoned to the flinty heart and griping hand of base self-interest, supported by the sword of law, especially when there is reason to suppose that the very avarice of farmers themselves has concurred with the errors of government to bring famine on the land?

In that case, my opinion is this: Whenever it hap-

pens that a man can claim nothing according to the rules of commerce and the principles of justice, he passes out of that department, and comes within the jurisdiction of mercy. In that province the magistrate has nothing at all to do; his interference is a violation of the property which it is his office to protect. Without all doubt, charity to the poor is a direct and obligatory duty upon all Christians, next in order after the payment of debts, full as strong, and by Nature made infinitely more delightful to us. Pufendorf, and other casuists, do not, I think, denominate it quite properly, when they call it a duty of imperfect obligation. But the manner, mode, time, choice of objects, and proportion are left to private discretion; and perhaps for that very reason it is performed with the greater satisfaction, because the discharge of it has more the appearance of freedom, — recommending us besides very specially to the Divine favor, as the exercise of a virtue most suitable to a being sensible of its own infirmity.

The cry of the people in cities and towns, though unfortunately (from a fear of their multitude and combination) the most regarded, ought, in *fact*, to be the *least* attended to, upon this subject: for citizens are in a state of utter ignorance of the means by which they are to be fed, and they contribute little or nothing, except in an infinitely circuitous manner, to their own maintenance. They are truly *fruges consumere nati*. They are to be heard with great respect and attention upon matters within their province, — that is, on trades and manufactures; but on anything that relates to agriculture they are to be listened to with the same *reverence* which we pay to the dogmas of other ignorant and presumptuous men.

If any one were to tell them that they were to give in an account of all the stock in their shops, — that attempts would be made to limit their profits, or raise the price of the laboring manufacturers upon them, or recommend to government, out of a capital from the public revenues, to set up a shop of the same commodities, in order to rival them, and keep them to reasonable dealing, — they would very soon see the impudence, injustice, and oppression of such a course. They would not be mistaken: but they are of opinion that agriculture is to be subject to other laws, and to be governed by other principles.

A greater and more ruinous mistake cannot be fallen into than that the trades of agriculture and grazing can be conducted upon any other than the common principles of commerce: namely, that the producer should be permitted, and even expected, to look to all possible profit which without fraud or violence he can make; to turn plenty or scarcity to the best advantage he can; to keep back or to bring forward his commodities at his pleasure; to account to no one for his stock or for his gain. On any other terms he is the slave of the consumer: and that he should be so is of no benefit to the consumer. No slave was ever so beneficial to the master as a freeman that deals with him on an equal footing by convention, formed on the rules and principles of contending interests and compromised advantages. The consumer, if he were suffered, would in the end always be the dupe of his own tyranny and injustice. The landed gentleman is never to forget that the farmer is his representative.

It is a perilous thing to try experiments on the farmer. The farmer's capital (except in a few per-

sons and in a very few places) is far more feeble than commonly is imagined. The trade is a very poor trade; it is subject to great risks and losses. The capital, such as it is, is turned but once in the year; in some branches it requires three years before the money is paid: I believe never less than three in the turnip and grass-land course, which is the prevalent course on the more or less fertile sandy and gravelly loams, — and these compose the soil in the south and southeast of England, the best adapted, and perhaps the only ones that are adapted, to the turnip husbandry.

It is very rare that the most prosperous farmer, counting the value of his quick and dead stock, the interest of the money he turns, together with his own wages as a bailiff or overseer, ever does make twelve or fifteen per centum by the year on his capital. I speak of the prosperous. In most of the parts of England which have fallen within my observation I have rarely known a farmer, who to his own trade has not added some other employment or traffic, that, after a course of the most unremitting parsimony and labor, (such for the greater part is theirs,) and persevering in his business for a long course of years, died worth more than paid his debts, leaving his posterity to continue in nearly the same equal conflict between industry and want, in which the last predecessor, and a long line of predecessors before him, lived and died.

Observe that I speak of the generality of farmers, who have not more than from one hundred and fifty to three or four hundred acres. There are few in this part of the country within the former or much beyond the latter extent. Unquestionably in other

places there are much larger. But I am convinced, whatever part of England be the theatre of his operations, a farmer who cultivates twelve hundred acres, which I consider as a large farm, though I know there are larger, cannot proceed with any degree of safety and effect with a smaller capital than ten thousand pounds, and that he cannot, in the ordinary course of culture, make more upon that great capital of ten thousand pounds than twelve hundred a year.

As to the weaker capitals, an easy judgment may be formed by what very small errors they may be farther attenuated, enervated, rendered unproductive, and perhaps totally destroyed.

This constant precariousness and ultimate moderate limits of a farmer's fortune, on the strongest capital, I press, not only on account of the hazardous speculations of the times, but because the excellent and most useful works of my friend, Mr. Arthur Young, tend to propagate that error (such I am very certain it is) of the largeness of a farmer's profits. It is not that his account of the produce does often greatly exceed, but he by no means makes the proper allowance for accidents and losses. I might enter into a convincing detail, if other more troublesome and more necessary details were not before me.

This proposed discretionary tax on labor militates with the recommendations of the Board of Agriculture: they recommend a general use of the drill culture. I agree with the Board, that, where the soil is not excessively heavy, or incumbered with large loose stones, (which, however, is the case with much otherwise good land,) that course is the best and most productive, — provided that the most accurate eye, the most vigilant superintendence, the most

prompt activity, which has no such day as to-morrow in its calendar, the most steady foresight and predisposing order to have everybody and everything ready in its place, and prepared to take advantage of the fortunate, fugitive moment, in this coquetting climate of ours, — provided, I say, all these combine to speed the plough, I admit its superiority over the old and general methods. But under procrastinating, improvident, ordinary husbandmen, who may neglect or let slip the few opportunities of sweetening and purifying their ground with perpetually renovated toil and undissipated attention, nothing, when tried to any extent, can be worse or more dangerous: the farm may be ruined, instead of having the soil enriched and sweetened by it.

But the excellence of the method on a proper soil, and conducted by husbandmen, of whom there are few, being readily granted, how, and on what conditions, is this culture obtained? Why, by a very great increase of labor: by an augmentation of the third part, at least, of the hand-labor, to say nothing of the horses and machinery employed in ordinary tillage. Now every man must be sensible how little becoming the gravity of legislature it is to encourage a board which recommends to us, and upon very weighty reasons unquestionably, an enlargement of the capital we employ in the operations of the hand, and then to pass an act which taxes that manual labor, already at a very high rate, — thus compelling us to diminish the quantity of labor which in the vulgar course we actually employ.

What is true of the farmer is equally true of the middle-man, — whether the middle-man acts as factor, jobber, salesman, or speculator, in the markets

of grain. These traders are to be left to their free course; and the more they make, and the richer they are, and the more largely they deal, the better both for the farmer and consumer, between whom they form a natural and most useful link of connection, — though by the machinations of the old evil counsellor, *Envy*, they are hated and maligned by both parties.

I hear that middle-men are accused of monopoly. Without question, the monopoly of authority is, in every instance and in every degree, an evil; but the monopoly of capital is the contrary. It is a great benefit, and a benefit particularly to the poor. A tradesman who has but a hundred pound capital, which (say) he can turn but once a year, cannot live upon a *profit* of ten per cent, because he cannot live upon ten pounds a year; but a man of ten thousand pounds capital can live and thrive upon five per cent profit in the year, because he has five hundred pounds a year. The same proportion holds in turning it twice or thrice. These principles are plain and simple; and it is not our ignorance, so much as the levity, the envy, and the malignity of our nature, that hinders us from perceiving and yielding to them: but we are not to suffer our vices to usurp the place of our judgment.

The balance between consumption and production makes price. The market settles, and alone can settle, that price. Market is the meeting and conference of the *consumer* and *producer*, when they mutually discover each other's wants. Nobody, I believe, has observed with any reflection what market is, without being astonished at the truth, the correctness, the celerity, the general equity, with which

the balance of wants is settled. They who wish the destruction of that balance, and would fain by arbitrary regulation decree that defective production should not be compensated by increased price, directly lay their *axe* to the root of production itself. They may, even in one year of such false policy, do mischiefs incalculable; because the trade of a farmer is, as I have before explained, one of the most precarious in its advantages, the most liable to losses, and the least profitable of any that is carried on. It requires ten times more of labor, of vigilance, of attention, of skill, and, let me add, of good fortune also, to carry on the business of a farmer with success, than what belongs to any other trade.

Seeing things in this light, I am far from presuming to censure the late circular instruction of Council to lord-lieutenants, but I confess I do not clearly discern its object. I am greatly afraid that the inquiry will raise some alarm, as a measure leading to the French system of putting corn into requisition. For that was preceded by an inquisition somewhat similar in its principle, though, according to their mode, their principles are full of that violence which *here* is not much to be feared. It goes on a principle directly opposite to mine: it presumes that the market is no fair *test* of plenty or scarcity. It raises a suspicion, which may affect the tranquillity of the public mind, "that the farmer keeps back, and takes unfair advantages by delay"; on the part of the dealer, it gives rise obviously to a thousand nefarious speculations.

In case the return should on the whole prove favorable, is it meant to ground a measure for encouraging exportation and checking the import of corn? If it is not, what end can it answer? And I believe it is not.

This opinion may be fortified by a report gone abroad, that intentions are entertained of erecting public granaries, and that this inquiry is to give government an advantage in its purchases.

I hear that such a measure has been proposed, and is under deliberation: that is, for government to set up a granary in every market-town, at the expense of the state, in order to extinguish the dealer, and to subject the farmer to the consumer, by securing corn to the latter at a certain and steady price.

If such a scheme is adopted, I should not like to answer for the safety of the granary, of the agents, or of the town itself in which the granary was erected: the first storm of popular frenzy would fall upon that granary.

So far in a political light.

In an economical light, I must observe that the construction of such granaries throughout the kingdom would be at an expense beyond all calculation. The keeping them up would be at a great charge. The management and attendance would require an army of agents, store-keepers, clerks, and servants. The capital to be employed in the purchase of grain would be enormous. The waste, decay, and corruption would be a dreadful drawback on the whole dealing; and the dissatisfaction of the people, at having decayed, tainted, or corrupted corn sold to them, as must be the case, would be serious.

This climate (whatever others may be) is not favorable to granaries, where wheat is to be kept for any time. The best, and indeed the only good granary, is the rick-yard of the farmer, where the corn is preserved in its own straw, sweet, clean, wholesome, free from vermin and from insects, and comparatively

at a trifle of expense. This, and the barn, enjoying many of the same advantages, have been the sole granaries of England from the foundation of its agriculture to this day. All this is done at the expense of the undertaker, and at his sole risk. He contributes to government, he receives nothing from it but protection, and to this he has a *claim*.

The moment that government appears at market, all the principles of market will be subverted. I don't know whether the farmer will suffer by it, as long as there is a tolerable market of competition; but I am sure, that, in the first place, the trading government will speedily become a bankrupt, and the consumer in the end will suffer. If government makes all its purchases at once, it will instantly raise the market upon itself. If it makes them by degrees, it must follow the course of the market. If it follows the course of the market, it will produce no effect, and the consumer may as well buy as he wants; therefore all the expense is incurred gratis.

But if the object of this scheme should be, what I suspect it is, to destroy the dealer, commonly called the middle-man, and by incurring a voluntary loss to carry the baker to deal with government, I am to tell them that they must set up another trade, that of a miller or a meal-man, attended with a new train of expenses and risks. If in both these trades they should succeed, so as to exclude those who trade on natural and private capitals, then they will have a monopoly in their hands, which, under the appearance of a monopoly of capital, will, in reality, be a monopoly of authority, and will ruin whatever it touches. The agriculture of the kingdom cannot stand before it.

A little place like Geneva, of not more than from twenty-five to thirty thousand inhabitants, — which has no territory, or next to none, — which depends for its existence on the good-will of three neighboring powers, and is of course continually in the state of something like a *siege*, or in the speculation of it, — might find some resource in state granaries, and some revenue from the monopoly of what was sold to the keepers of public-houses. This is a policy for a state too small for agriculture. It is not (for instance) fit for so great a country as the Pope possesses, — where, however, it is adopted and pursued in a greater extent, and with more strictness. Certain of the Pope's territories, from whence the city of Rome is supplied, being obliged to furnish Rome and the granaries of his Holiness with corn at a certain price, that part of the Papal territories is utterly ruined. That ruin may be traced with certainty to this sole cause; and it appears indubitably by a comparison of their state and condition with that of the other part of the ecclesiastical dominions, not subjected to the same regulations, which are in circumstances highly flourishing.

The reformation of this evil system is in a manner impracticable. For, first, it does keep bread and all other provisions equally subject to the chamber of supply, at a pretty reasonable and regular price, in the city of Rome. This preserves quiet among the numerous poor, idle, and naturally mutinous people of a very great capital. But the quiet of the town is purchased by the ruin of the country and the ultimate wretchedness of both. The next cause which renders this evil incurable is the jobs which have grown out of it, and which, in spite of all precautions,

would grow out of such things even under governments far more potent than the feeble authority of the Pope.

This example of Rome, which has been derived from the most ancient times, and the most flourishing period of the Roman Empire, (but not of the Roman agriculture,) may serve as a great caution to all governments not to attempt to feed the people out of the hands of the magistrates. If once they are habituated to it, though but for one half-year, they will never be satisfied to have it otherwise. And having looked to government for bread, on the very first scarcity they will turn and bite the hand that fed them. To avoid that *evil*, government will redouble the causes of it; and then it will become inveterate and incurable.

I beseech the government (which I take in the largest sense of the word, comprehending the two Houses of Parliament) seriously to consider that years of scarcity or plenty do not come alternately or at short intervals, but in pretty long cycles and irregularly, and consequently that we cannot assure ourselves, if we take a wrong measure, from the temporary necessities of one season, but that the next, and probably more, will drive us to the continuance of it; so that, in my opinion, there is no way of preventing this evil, which goes to the destruction of all our agriculture, and of that part of our internal commerce which touches our agriculture the most nearly, as well as the safety and very being of government, but manfully to resist the very first idea, speculative or practical, that it is within the competence of government, taken as government, or even of the rich, as rich, to supply to the poor those necessaries which it has

pleased the Divine Providence for a while to withhold from them. We, the people, ought to be made sensible that it is not in breaking the laws of commerce, which are the laws of Nature, and consequently the laws of God, that we are to place our hope of softening the Divine displeasure to remove any calamity under which we suffer or which hangs over us.

So far as to the principles of general policy.

As to the state of things which is urged as a reason to deviate from them, these are the circumstances of the harvest of 1794 and 1795. With regard to the harvest of 1794, in relation to the noblest grain, wheat, it is allowed to have been somewhat short, but not excessively, — and in quality, for the seven-and twenty years during which I have been a farmer, I never remember wheat to have been so good. The world were, however, deceived in their speculations upon it, — the farmer as well as the dealer. Accordingly the price fluctuated beyond anything I can remember: for at one time of the year I sold my wheat at 14*l.* a load, (I sold off all I had, as I thought this was a reasonable price,) when at the end of the season, if I had then had any to sell, I might have got thirty guineas for the same sort of grain. I sold all that I had, as I said, at a comparatively low price, because I thought it a good price, compared with what I thought the general produce of the harvest; but when I came to consider what my own *total* was, I found that the quantity had not answered my expectation. It must be remembered that this year of produce, (the year 1794,) short, but excellent, followed a year which was not extraordinary in production, nor of a superior quality, and left but lit-

tle in store. At first, this was not felt, because the harvest came in unusually early, — earlier than common by a full month.

The winter, at the end of 1794 and beginning of 1795, was more than usually unfavorable both to corn and grass, owing to the sudden relaxation of very rigorous frosts, followed by rains, which were again rapidly succeeded by frosts of still greater rigor than the first.

Much wheat was utterly destroyed. The clover-grass suffered in many places. What I never observed before, the rye-grass, or coarse bent, suffered more than the clover. Even the meadow-grass in some places was killed to the very roots. In the spring appearances were better than we expected. All the early sown grain recovered itself, and came up with great vigor; but that which was late sown was feeble, and did not promise to resist any blights in the spring, which, however, with all its unpleasant vicissitudes, passed off very well; and nothing looked better than the wheat at the time of blooming; — but at that most critical time of all, a cold, dry east wind, attended with very sharp frosts, longer and stronger than I recollect at that time of year, destroyed the flowers, and withered up, in an astonishing manner, the whole side of the ear next to the wind. At that time I brought to town some of the ears, for the purpose of showing to my friends the operation of those unnatural frosts, and according to their extent I predicted a great scarcity. But such is the pleasure of agreeable prospects, that my opinion was little regarded.

On threshing, I found things as I expected, — the ears not filled, some of the capsules quite empty, and

several others containing only withered, hungry grain, inferior to the appearance of rye. My best ears and grain were not fine; never had I grain of so low a quality: yet I sold one load for 21*l*. At the same time I bought my seed wheat (it was excellent) at 23*l*. Since then the price has risen, and I have sold about two load of the same sort at 23*l*. Such was the state of the market when I left home last Monday. Little remains in my barn. I hope some in the rick may be better, since it was earlier sown, as well as I can recollect. Some of my neighbors have better, some quite as bad, or even worse. I suspect it will be found, that, wherever the blighting wind and those frosts at blooming-time have prevailed, the produce of the wheat crop will turn out very indifferent. Those parts which have escaped will, I can hardly doubt, have a reasonable produce.

As to the other grains, it is to be observed, as the wheat ripened very late, (on account, I conceive, of the blights,) the barley got the start of it, and was ripe first. The crop was with me, and wherever my inquiry could reach, excellent; in some places far superior to mine.

The clover, which came up with the barley, was the finest I remember to have seen.

The turnips of this year are generally good.

The clover sown last year, where not totally destroyed, gave two good crops, or one crop and a plentiful feed; and, bating the loss of the rye-grass, I do not remember a better produce.

The meadow-grass yielded but a middling crop, and neither of the sown or natural grass was there in any farmer's possession any remainder from the year worth taking into account. In most places there was none at all.

Oats with me were not in a quantity more considerable than in commonly good seasons; but I have never known them heavier than they were in other places. The oat was not only an heavy, but an uncommonly abundant crop.

My ground under pease did not exceed an acre or thereabouts, but the crop was great indeed. I believe it is throughout the country exuberant. It is, however, to be remarked, as generally of all the grains, so particularly of the pease, that there was not the smallest quantity in reserve.

The demand of the year must depend solely on its own produce; and the price of the spring corn is not to be expected to fall very soon, or at any time very low.

Uxbridge is a great corn market. As I came through that town, I found that at the last market-day barley was at forty shillings a quarter. Oats there were literally none; and the inn-keeper was obliged to send for them to London. I forgot to ask about pease. Potatoes were 5*s*. the bushel.

In the debate on this subject in the House, I am told that a leading member of great ability, *little conversant in these matters*, observed, that the general uniform dearness of butcher's meat, butter, and cheese could not be owing to a defective produce of wheat; and on this ground insinuated a suspicion of some unfair practice on the subject, that called for inquiry.

Unquestionably, the mere deficiency of wheat could not cause the dearness of the other articles, which extends not only to the provisions he mentioned, but to every other without exception.

The cause is, indeed, so very plain and obvious that the wonder is the other way. When a properly di-

rected inquiry is made, the gentlemen who are amazed at the price of these commodities will find, that, when hay is at six pound a load, as they must know it is, herbage, and for more than one year, must be scanty; and they will conclude, that, if grass be scarce, beef, veal, mutton, butter, milk, and cheese *must* be dear.

But to take up the matter somewhat more in detail. — If the wheat harvest in 1794, excellent in quality, was defective in quantity, the barley harvest was in quality ordinary enough, and in quantity deficient. This was soon felt in the price of malt.

Another article of produce (beans) was not at all plentiful. The crop of pease was wholly destroyed, so that several farmers pretty early gave up all hopes on that head, and cut the green haulm as fodder for the cattle, then perishing for want of food in that dry and burning summer. I myself came off better than most: I had about the fourth of a crop of pease.

It will be recollected, that, in a manner, all the bacon and pork consumed in this country (the far largest consumption of meat out of towns) is, when growing, fed on grass, and on whey or skimmed milk, — and when fatting, partly on the latter. This is the case in the dairy countries, all of them great breeders and feeders of swine; but for the much greater part, and in all the corn countries, they are fattened on beans, barley-meal, and pease. When the food of the animal is scarce, his flesh must be dear. This, one would suppose, would require no great penetration to discover.

This failure of so very large a supply of flesh in one species naturally throws the whole demand of the consumer on the diminished supply of all kinds of flesh, and, indeed, on all the matters of human sus-

tenance. Nor, in my opinion, are we to expect a greater cheapness in that article for this year, even though corn should grow cheaper, as it is to be hoped it will. The store swine, from the failure of subsistence last year, are now at an extravagant price. Pigs, at our fairs, have sold lately for fifty shillings, which two years ago would not have brought more than twenty.

As to sheep, none, I thought, were strangers to the general failure of the article of turnips last year: the early having been burned, as they came up, by the great drought and heat; the late, and those of the early which had escaped, were destroyed by the chilling frosts of the winter and the wet and severe weather of the spring. In many places a full fourth of the sheep or the lambs were lost; what remained of the lambs were poor and ill fed, the ewes having had no milk. The calves came late, and they were generally an article the want of which was as much to be dreaded as any other. So that article of food, formerly so abundant in the early part of the summer, particularly in London, and which in a great part supplied the place of mutton for near two months, did little less than totally fail.

All the productions of the earth link in with each other. All the sources of plenty, in all and every article, were dried or frozen up. The scarcity was not, as gentlemen seem to suppose, in wheat only.

Another cause, and that not of inconsiderable operation, tended to produce a scarcity in flesh provision. It is one that on many accounts cannot be too much regretted, and the rather, as it was the sole *cause* of a scarcity in that article which arose from the proceedings of men themselves: I mean the stop put to the distillery.

The hogs (and that would be sufficient) which were fed with the waste wash of that produce did not demand the fourth part of the corn used by farmers in fattening them. The spirit was nearly so much clear gain to the nation. It is an odd way of making flesh cheap, to stop or check the distillery.

The distillery in itself produces an immense article of trade almost all over the world, — to Africa, to North America, and to various parts of Europe. It is of great use, next to food itself, to our fisheries and to our whole navigation. A great part of the distillery was carried on by damaged corn, unfit for bread, and by barley and malt of the lowest quality. These things could not be more unexceptionably employed. The domestic consumption of spirits produced, without complaints, a very great revenue, applicable, if we pleased, in bounties, to the bringing corn from other places, far beyond the value of that consumed in making it, or to the encouragement of its increased production at home.

As to what is said, in a physical and moral view, against the home consumption of spirits, experience has long since taught me very little to respect the declamations on that subject. Whether the thunder of the laws or the thunder of eloquence "is hurled on *gin*," always I am thunder-proof. The alembic, in my mind, has furnished to the world a far greater benefit and blessing than if the *opus maximum* had been really found by chemistry, and, like Midas, we could turn everything into gold.

Undoubtedly there may be a dangerous abuse in the excess of spirits; and at one time I am ready to believe the abuse was great. When spirits are cheap, the business of drunkenness is achieved with little

time or labor; but that evil I consider to be wholly done away. Observation for the last forty years, and very particularly for the last thirty, has furnished me with ten instances of drunkenness from other causes for one from this. Ardent spirit is a great medicine, often to remove distempers, much more frequently to prevent them, or to chase them away in their beginnings. It is not nutritive in *any great* degree. But if not food, it greatly alleviates the want of it. It invigorates the stomach for the digestion of poor, meagre diet, not easily alliable to the human consti tution. Wine the poor cannot touch. Beer, as ap plied to many occasions, (as among seamen and fish ermen, for instance,) will by no means do the business. Let me add, what wits inspired with champagne and claret will turn into ridicule, — it is a medicine for the mind. Under the pressure of the cares and sorrows of our mortal condition, men have at all times and in all countries called in some physical aid to their moral consolations, — wine, beer, opium, brandy, or tobacco.

I consider, therefore, the stopping of the distillery, economically, financially, commercially, medicinally, and in some degree morally too, as a measure rather well meant than well considered. It is too precious a sacrifice to prejudice.

Gentlemen well know whether there be a scarcity of partridges, and whether that be an effect of hoarding and combination. All the tame race of birds live and die as the wild do.

As to the lesser articles, they are like the greater. They have followed the fortune of the season. Why are fowls dear? Was not this the farmer's or jobber's fault? I sold from my yard to a jobber six young

and lean fowls for four-and-twenty shillings, — fowls for which two years ago the same man would not have given a shilling apiece. He sold them afterwards at Uxbridge, and they were taken to London to receive the last hand.

As to the operation of the war in causing the scarcity of provisions, I understand that Mr. Pitt has given a particular answer to it; but I do not think it worth powder and shot.

I do not wonder the papers are so full of this sort of matter, but I am a little surprised it should be mentioned in Parliament. Like all great state questions, peace and war may be discussed, and different opinions fairly formed, on political grounds; but on a question of the present price of provisions, when peace with the Regicides is always uppermost, I can only say that great is the love of it.

After all, have we not reason to be thankful to the Giver of all Good? In our history, and when "the laborer of England is said to have been once happy," we find constantly, after certain intervals, a period of real famine, by which a melancholy havoc was made among the human race. The price of provisions fluctuated dreadfully, demonstrating a deficiency very different from the worst failures of the present moment. Never, since I have known England, have I known more than a comparative scarcity. The price of wheat, taking a number of years together, has had no very considerable fluctuation; nor has it risen exceedingly until within this twelvemonth. Even now, I do not know of one man, woman, or child that has perished from famine: fewer, if any, I believe, than in years of plenty, when such a thing may happen by accident. This is owing to a care

and superintendence of the poor, far greater than any I remember.

The consideration of this ought to bind us all, rich and poor together, against those wicked writers of the newspapers who would inflame the poor against their friends, guardians, patrons, and protectors. Not only very few (I have observed that I know of none, though I live in a place as poor as most) have actually died of want, but we have seen no traces of those dreadful exterminating epidemics which, in consequence of scanty and unwholesome food, in former times not unfrequently wasted whole nations. Let us be saved from too much wisdom of our own, and we shall do tolerably well.

It is one of the finest problems in legislation, and what has often engaged my thoughts whilst I followed that profession, — What the state ought to take upon itself to direct by the public wisdom, and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual discretion. Nothing, certainly, can be laid down on the subject that will not admit of exceptions, — many permanent, some occasional. But the clearest line of distinction which I could draw, whilst I had my chalk to draw any line, was this: that the state ought to confine itself to what regards the state or the creatures of the state: namely, the exterior establishment of its religion; its magistracy; its revenue; its military force by sea and land; the corporations that owe their existence to its fiat; in a word, to everything that is *truly and properly* public, — to the public peace, to the public safety, to the public order, to the public prosperity. In its preventive police it ought to be sparing of its efforts, and to employ means, rather few, unfrequent,

and strong, than many, and frequent, and, of course, as they multiply their puny politic race, and dwindle, small and feeble. Statesmen who know themselves will, with the dignity which belongs to wisdom, proceed only in this the superior orb and first mover of their duty, steadily, vigilantly, severely, courageously: whatever remains will, in a manner, provide for itself. But as they descend from the state to a province, from a province to a parish, and from a parish to a private house, they go on accelerated in their fall. They *cannot* do the lower duty; and in proportion as they try it, they will certainly fail in the higher. They ought to know the different departments of things, — what belongs to laws, and what manners alone can regulate. To these great politicians may give a leaning, but they cannot give a law.

Our legislature has fallen into this fault, as well as other governments: all have fallen into it more or less. The once mighty state which was nearest to us locally, nearest to us in every way, and whose ruins threaten to fall upon our heads, is a strong instance of this error. I can never quote France without a foreboding sigh, — *'ΕΣΣΕΤΑΙ 'ΗΜΑΡ!* Scipio said it to his recording Greek friend amidst the flames of the great rival of his country. That state has fallen by the hands of the parricides of their country, called the Revolutionists and Constitutionalists of France: a species of traitors, of whose fury and atrocious wickedness nothing in the annals of the frenzy and depravation of mankind had before furnished an example, and of whom I can never think or speak without a mixed sensation of disgust, of horror, and of detestation, not easy to be expressed.

These nefarious monsters destroyed their country for what was good in it: for much good there was in the Constitution of that noble monarchy, which, in all kinds, formed and nourished great men, and great patterns of virtue to the world. But though its enemies were not enemies to its faults, its faults furnished them with means for its destruction. My dear departed friend, whose loss is even greater to the public than to me, had often remarked, that the leading vice of the French monarchy (which he had well studied) was in good intention ill-directed, and a restless desire of governing too much. The hand of authority was seen in everything and in every place. All, therefore, that happened amiss, in the course even of domestic affairs, was attributed to the government; and as it always happens in this kind of officious universal interference, what began in odious power ended always, I may say without an exception, in contemptible imbecility. For this reason, as far as I can approve of any novelty, I thought well of the provincial administrations. Those, if the superior power had been severe and vigilant and vigorous, might have been of much use politically in removing government from many invidious details. But as everything is good or bad as it is related or combined, government being relaxed above as it was relaxed below, and the brains of the people growing more and more addle with every sort of visionary speculation, the shiftings of the scene in the provincial theatres became only preparatives to a revolution in the kingdom, and the popular actings there only the rehearsals of the terrible drama of the Republic.

Tyranny and cruelty may make men justly wish

the downfall of abused powers, but I believe that no government ever yet perished from any other direct cause than its own weakness. My opinion is against an overdoing of any sort of administration, and more especially against this most momentous of all meddling on the part of authority, — the meddling with the subsistence of the people.

A

# LETTER TO A NOBLE LORD

ON

THE ATTACKS MADE UPON MR. BURKE AND HIS PENSION, IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

BY

THE DUKE OF BEDFORD AND THE EARL OF LAUDERDALE,

EARLY IN THE PRESENT SESSION OF PARLIAMENT.

1796.

# LETTER.

MY LORD, — I could hardly flatter myself with the hope that so very early in the season I should have to acknowledge obligations to the Duke of Bedford and to the Earl of Lauderdale. These noble persons have lost no time in conferring upon me that sort of honor which it is alone within their competence, and which it is certainly most congenial to their nature and their manners, to bestow.

To be ill spoken of, in whatever language they speak, by the zealots of the new sect in philosophy and politics, of which these noble persons think so charitably, and of which others think so justly, to me is no matter of uneasiness or surprise. To have incurred the displeasure of the Duke of Orleans or the Duke of Bedford, to fall under the censure of Citizen Brissot or of his friend the Earl of Lauderdale, I ought to consider as proofs, not the least satisfactory, that I have produced some part of the effect I proposed by my endeavors. I have labored hard to earn what the noble Lords are generous enough to pay. Personal offence I have given them none. The part they take against me is from zeal to the cause. It is well, — it is perfectly well. I have to do homage to their justice. I have to thank the Bedfords and the Lauderdales for having so faithfully and so fully acquitted towards me whatever arrear of debt

was left undischarged by the Priestleys and the Paines.

Some, perhaps, may think them executors in their own wrong: I at least have nothing to complain of. They have gone beyond the demands of justice. They have been (a little, perhaps, beyond their intention) favorable to me. They have been the means of bringing out by their invectives the handsome things which Lord Grenville has had the goodness and condescension to say in my behalf. Retired as I am from the world, and from all its affairs and all its pleasures, I confess it does kindle in my nearly extinguished feelings a very vivid satisfaction to be so attacked and so commended. It is soothing to my wounded mind to be commended by an able, vigorous, and well-informed statesman, and at the very moment when he stands forth, with a manliness and resolution worthy of himself and of his cause, for the preservation of the person and government of our sovereign, and therein for the security of the laws, the liberties, the morals, and the lives of his people. To be in any fair way connected with such things is indeed a distinction. No philosophy can make me above it: no melancholy can depress me so low as to make me wholly insensible to such an honor.

Why will they not let me remain in obscurity and inaction? Are they apprehensive, that, if an atom of me remains, the sect has something to fear? Must I be annihilated, lest, like old John Zisca's, my skin might be made into a drum, to animate Europe to eternal battle against a tyranny that threatens to overwhelm all Europe and all the human race?

My Lord, it is a subject of awful meditation. Be-

fore this of France, the annals of all time have not furnished an instance of a *complete* revolution. That revolution seems to have extended even to the constitution of the mind of man. It has this of wonderful in it, that it resembles what Lord Verulam says of the operations of Nature: It was perfect, not only in its elements and principles, but in all its members and its organs, from the very beginning. The moral scheme of France furnishes the only pattern ever known which they who admire will *instantly* resemble. It is, indeed, an inexhaustible repertory of one kind of examples. In my wretched condition, though hardly to be classed with the living, I am not safe from them. They have tigers to fall upon animated strength; they have hyenas to prey upon carcasses. The national menagerie is collected by the first physiologists of the time; and it is defective in no description of savage nature. They pursue even such as me into the obscurest retreats, and haul them before their revolutionary tribunals. Neither sex, nor age, nor the sanctuary of the tomb, is sacred to them. They have so determined a hatred to all privileged orders, that they deny even to the departed the sad immunities of the grave. They are not wholly without an object. Their turpitude purveys to their malice; and they unplumb the dead for bullets to assassinate the living. If all revolutionists were not proof against all caution, I should recommend it to their consideration, that no persons were ever known in history, either sacred or profane, to vex the sepulchre, and by their sorceries to call up the prophetic dead, with any other event than the prediction of their own disastrous fate. — "Leave me, oh, leave me to repose!"

In one thing I can excuse the Duke of Bedford for his attack upon me and my mortuary pension: He cannot readily comprehend the transaction he condemns. What I have obtained was the fruit of no bargain, the production of no intrigue, the result of no compromise, the effect of no solicitation. The first suggestion of it never came from me, mediately or immediately, to his Majesty or any of his ministers. It was long known that the instant my engagements would permit it, and before the heaviest of all calamities had forever condemned me to obscurity and sorrow, I had resolved on a total retreat. I had executed that design. I was entirely out of the way of serving or of hurting any statesman or any party, when the ministers so generously and so nobly carried into effect the spontaneous bounty of the crown. Both descriptions have acted as became them. When I could no longer serve them, the ministers have considered my situation. When I could no longer hurt them, the revolutionists have trampled on my infirmity. My gratitude, I trust, is equal to the manner in which the benefit was conferred. It came to me, indeed, at a time of life, and in a state of mind and body, in which no circumstance of fortune could afford me any real pleasure. But this was no fault in the royal donor, or in his ministers, who were pleased, in acknowledging the merits of an invalid servant of the public, to assuage the sorrows of a desolate old man.

It would ill become me to boast of anything. It would as ill become me, thus called upon, to depreciate the value of a long life spent with unexampled toil in the service of my country. Since the total body of my services, on account of the industry

which was shown in them, and the fairness of my intentions, have obtained the acceptance of my sovereign, it would be absurd in me to range myself on the side of the Duke of Bedford and the Corresponding Society, or, as far as in me lies, to permit a dispute on the rate at which the authority appointed by *our* Constitution to estimate such things has been pleased to set them.

Loose libels ought to be passed by in silence and contempt. By me they have been so always. I knew, that, as long as I remained in public, I should live down the calumnies of malice and the judgments of ignorance. If I happened to be now and then in the wrong, (as who is not?) like all other men, I must bear the consequence of my faults and my mistakes. The libels of the present day are just of the same stuff as the libels of the past. But they derive an importance from the rank of the persons they come from, and the gravity of the place where they were uttered. In some way or other I ought to take some notice of them. To assert myself thus traduced is not vanity or arrogance. It is a demand of justice; it is a demonstration of gratitude. If I am unworthy, the ministers are worse than prodigal. On that hypothesis, I perfectly agree with the Duke of Bedford.

For whatever I have been (I am now no more) I put myself on my country. I ought to be allowed a reasonable freedom, because I stand upon my deliverance; and no culprit ought to plead in irons. Even in the utmost latitude of defensive liberty, I wish to preserve all possible decorum. Whatever it may be in the eyes of these noble persons themselves, to me their situation calls for the most pro-

found respect. If I should happen to trespass a little, which I trust I shall not, let it always be supposed that a confusion of characters may produce mistakes, — that, in the masquerades of the grand carnival of our age, whimsical adventures happen, odd things are said and pass off. If I should fail a single point in the high respect I owe to those illustrious persons, I cannot be supposed to mean the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of the House of Peers, but the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale of Palace Yard, — the Dukes and Earls of Brentford. There they are on the pavement; there they seem to come nearer to my humble level, and, virtually at least, to have waived their high privilege.

Making this protestation, I refuse all revolutionary tribunals, where men have been put to death for no other reason than that they had obtained favors from the crown. I claim, not the letter, but the spirit of the old English law, — that is, to be tried by my peers. I decline his Grace's jurisdiction as a judge. I challenge the Duke of Bedford as a juror to pass upon the value of my services. Whatever his natural parts may be, I cannot recognize in his few and idle years the competence to judge of my long and laborious life. If I can help it, he shall not be on the inquest of my *quantum meruit*. Poor rich man! he can hardly know anything of public industry in its exertions, or can estimate its compensations when its work is done. I have no doubt of his Grace's readiness in all the calculations of vulgar arithmetic; but I shrewdly suspect that he is little studied in the theory of moral proportions, and has never learned the rule of three in the arithmetic of policy and state.

His Grace thinks I have obtained too much. I answer, that my exertions, whatever they have been, were such as no hopes of pecuniary reward could possibly excite; and no pecuniary compensation can possibly reward them. Between money and such services, if done by abler men than I am, there is no common principle of comparison: they are quantities incommensurable. Money is made for the comfort and convenience of animal life. It cannot be a reward for what mere animal life must, indeed, sustain, but never can inspire. With submission to his Grace, I have not had more than sufficient. As to any noble use, I trust I know how to employ as well as he a much greater fortune than he possesses. In a more confined application, I certainly stand in need of every kind of relief and easement much more than he does. When I say I have not received more than I deserve, is this the language I hold to Majesty? No! Far, very far, from it! Before that presence I claim no merit at all. Everything towards me is favor and bounty. One style to a gracious benefactor; another to a proud and insulting foe.

His Grace is pleased to aggravate my guilt by charging my acceptance of his Majesty's grant as a departure from my ideas and the spirit of my conduct with regard to economy. If it be, my ideas of economy were false and ill-founded. But they are the Duke of Bedford's ideas of economy I have contradicted, and not my own. If he means to allude to certain bills brought in by me on a message from the throne in 1782, I tell him that there is nothing in my conduct that can contradict either the letter or the spirit of those acts. Does he mean the Pay-Office Act? I take it for granted he does

not. The act to which he alludes is, I suppose, the Establishment Act. I greatly doubt whether his Grace has ever read the one or the other. The first of these systems cost me, with every assistance which my then situation gave me, pains incredible. I found an opinion common through all the offices, and general in the public at large, that it would prove impossible to reform and methodize the office of paymaster-general. I undertook it, however; and I succeeded in my undertaking. Whether the military service, or whether the general economy of our finances have profited by that act, I leave to those who are acquainted with the army and with the treasury to judge.

An opinion full as general prevailed also, at the same time, that nothing could be done for the regulation of the civil list establishment. The very attempt to introduce method into it, and any limitations to its services, was held absurd. I had not seen the man who so much as suggested one economical principle or an economical expedient upon that subject. Nothing but coarse amputation or coarser taxation were then talked of, both of them without design, combination, or the least shadow of principle. Blind and headlong zeal or factious fury were the whole contribution brought by the most noisy, on that occasion, towards the satisfaction of the public or the relief of the crown.

Let me tell my youthful censor, that the necessities of that time required something very different from what others then suggested or what his Grace now conceives. Let me inform him, that it was one of the most critical periods in our annals.

Astronomers have supposed, that, if a certain comet,

whose path intersected the ecliptic, had met the earth in some (I forget what) sign, it would have whirled us along with it, in its eccentric course, into God knows what regions of heat and cold. Had the portentous comet of the Rights of Man, (which "from its horrid hair shakes pestilence and war," and "with fear of change perplexes monarchs,") had that comet crossed upon us in that internal state of England, nothing human could have prevented our being irresistibly hurried out of the highway of heaven into all the vices, crimes, horrors, and miseries of the French Revolution.

Happily, France was not then Jacobinized. Her hostility was at a good distance. We had a limb cut off, but we preserved the body: we lost our colonies, but we kept our Constitution. There was, indeed, much intestine heat; there was a dreadful fermentation. Wild and savage insurrection quitted the woods, and prowled about our streets in the name of Reform. Such was the distemper of the public mind, that there was no madman, in his maddest ideas and maddest projects, who might not count upon numbers to support his principles and execute his designs.

Many of the changes, by a great misnomer called Parliamentary Reforms, went, not in the intention of all the professors and supporters of them, undoubtedly, but went in their certain, and, in my opinion, not very remote effect, home to the utter destruction of the Constitution of this kingdom. Had they taken place, not France, but England, would have had the honor of leading up the death-dance of democratic revolution. Other projects, exactly coincident in time with those, struck at the very existence of the

kingdom under any Constitution. There are who remember the blind fury of some and the lamentable helplessness of others; here, a torpid confusion, from a panic fear of the danger, — there, the same inaction, from a stupid insensibility to it; here, well-wishers to the mischief, — there, indifferent lookers-on. At the same time, a sort of National Convention, dubious in its nature and perilous in its example, nosed Parliament in the very seat of its authority, — sat with a sort of superintendence over it, — and little less than dictated to it, not only laws, but the very form and essence of legislature itself. In Ireland things ran in a still more eccentric course. Government was unnerved, confounded, and in a manner suspended. Its equipoise was totally gone. I do not mean to speak disrespectfully of Lord North. He was a man of admirable parts, of general knowledge, of a versatile understanding fitted for every sort of business, of infinite wit and pleasantry, of a delightful temper, and with a mind most perfectly disinterested. But it would be only to degrade myself by a weak adulation, and not to honor the memory of a great man, to deny that he wanted something of the vigilance and spirit of command that the time required. Indeed, a darkness next to the fog of this awful day lowered over the whole region. For a little time the helm appeared abandoned.

> Ipse diem noctemque negat discernere cœlo,
> Nec meminisse viæ mediâ Palinurus in undâ.

At that time I was connected with men of high place in the community. They loved liberty as much as the Duke of Bedford can do; and they understood it at least as well. Perhaps their politics, as usual, took a tincture from their character, and

they cultivated what they loved. The liberty they pursued was a liberty inseparable from order, from virtue, from morals, and from religion, — and was neither hypocritically nor fanatically followed. They did not wish that liberty, in itself one of the first of blessings, should in its perversion become the greatest curse which could fall upon mankind. To preserve the Constitution entire, and practically equal to all the great ends of its formation, not in one single part, but in all its parts, was to them the first object. Popularity and power they regarded alike. These were with them only different means of obtaining that object, and had no preference over each other in their minds, but as one or the other might afford a surer or a less certain prospect of arriving at that end. It is some consolation to me, in the cheerless gloom which darkens the evening of my life, that with them I commenced my political career, and never for a moment, in reality nor in appearance, for any length of time, was separated from their good wishes and good opinion.

By what accident it matters not, nor upon what desert, but just then, and in the midst of that hunt of obloquy which ever has pursued me with a full cry through life, I had obtained a very considerable degree of public confidence. I know well enough how equivocal a test this kind of popular opinion forms of the merit that obtained it. I am no stranger to the insecurity of its tenure. I do not boast of it. It is mentioned to show, not how highly I prize the thing, but my right to value the use I made of it. I endeavored to turn that short-lived advantage to myself into a permanent benefit to my country. Far am I from detracting from the merit of some gentlemen,

out of office or in it, on that occasion. No! It is not my way to refuse a full and heaped measure of justice to the aids that I receive. I have through life been willing to give everything to others, — and to reserve nothing for myself, but the inward conscience that I had omitted no pains to discover, to animate, to discipline, to direct the abilities of the country for its service, and to place them in the best light to improve their age, or to adorn it. This conscience I have. I have never suppressed any man, never checked him for a moment in his course, by any jealousy, or by any policy. I was always ready, to the height of my means, (and they were always infinitely below my desires,) to forward those abilities which overpowered my own. He is an ill-furnished undertaker who has no machinery but his own hands to work with. Poor in my own faculties, I ever thought myself rich in theirs. In that period of difficulty and danger, more especially, I consulted and sincerely coöperated with men of all parties who seemed disposed to the same ends, or to any main part of them. Nothing to prevent disorder was omitted: when it appeared, nothing to subdue it was left uncounselled nor unexecuted, as far as I could prevail. At the time I speak of, and having a momentary lead, so aided and so encouraged, and as a feeble instrument in a mighty hand — I do not say I saved my country; I am sure I did my country important service. There were few, indeed, that did not at that time acknowledge it, — and that time was thirteen years ago. It was but one voice, that no man in the kingdom better deserved an honorable provision should be made for him.

So much for my general conduct through the whole

of the portentous crisis from 1780 to 1782, and the general sense then entertained of that conduct by my country. But my character as a reformer, in the particular instances which the Duke of Bedford refers to, is so connected in principle with my opinions on the hideous changes which have since barbarized France, and, spreading thence, threaten the political and moral order of the whole world, that it seems to demand something of a more detailed discussion.

My economical reforms were not, as his Grace may think, the suppression of a paltry pension or employment, more or less. Economy in my plans was, as it ought to be, secondary, subordinate, instrumental. I acted on state principles. I found a great distemper in the commonwealth, and according to the nature of the evil and of the object I treated it. The malady was deep; it was complicated, in the causes and in the symptoms. Throughout it was full of contra-indicants. On one hand, government, daily growing more invidious from an apparent increase of the means of strength, was every day growing more contemptible by real weakness. Nor was this dissolution confined to government commonly so called. It extended to Parliament, which was losing not a little in its dignity and estimation by an opinion of its not acting on worthy motives. On the other hand, the desires of the people (partly natural and partly infused into them by art) appeared in so wild and inconsiderate a manner with regard to the economical object, (for I set aside for a moment the dreadful tampering with the body of the Constitution itself,) that, if their petitions had literally been complied with, the state would have been convulsed, and a gate would have been opened through which all prop-

erty might be sacked and ravaged. Nothing could have saved the public from the mischiefs of the false reform but its absurdity, which would soon have brought itself, and with it all real reform, into discredit. This would have left a rankling wound in the hearts of the people, who would know they had failed in the accomplishment of their wishes, but who, like the rest of mankind in all ages, would impute the blame to anything rather than to their own proceedings. But there were then persons in the world who nourished complaint, and would have been thoroughly disappointed, if the people were ever satisfied. I was not of that humor. I wished that they *should* be satisfied. It was my aim to give to the people the substance of what I knew they desired, and what I thought was right, whether they desired it or not, before it had been modified for them into senseless petitions. I knew that there is a manifest, marked distinction, which ill men with ill designs, or weak men incapable of any design, will constantly be confounding, — that is, a marked distinction between change and reformation. The former alters the substance of the objects themselves, and gets rid of all their essential good as well as of all the accidental evil annexed to them. Change is novelty; and whether it is to operate any one of the effects of reformation at all, or whether it may not contradict the very principle upon which reformation is desired, cannot be certainly known beforehand. Reform is not a change in the substance or in the primary modification of the object, but a direct application of a remedy to the grievance complained of. So far as that is removed, all is sure. It stops there; and if it fails, the substance which underwent the operation, at the very worst, is but where it was

All this, in effect, I think, but am not sure, I have said elsewhere. It cannot at this time be too often repeated, line upon line, precept upon precept, until it comes into the currency of a proverb, — *To innovate is not to reform.* The French revolutionists complained of everything; they refused to reform anything; and they left nothing, no, nothing at all, *unchanged.* The consequences are *before* us, — not in remote history, not in future prognostication: they are about us; they are upon us. They shake the public security; they menace private enjoyment. They dwarf the growth of the young; they break the quiet of the old. If we travel, they stop our way. They infest us in town; they pursue us to the country. Our business is interrupted, our repose is troubled, our pleasures are saddened, our very studies are poisoned and perverted, and knowledge is rendered worse than ignorance, by the enormous evils of this dreadful innovation. The Revolution harpies of France, sprung from Night and Hell, or from that chaotic Anarchy which generates equivocally "all monstrous, all prodigious things," cuckoo-like, adulterously lay their eggs, and brood over, and hatch them in the nest of every neighboring state. These obscene harpies, who deck themselves in I know not what divine attributes, but who in reality are foul and ravenous birds of prey, (both mothers and daughters,) flutter over our heads, and souse down upon our tables, and leave nothing unrent, unrifled, unravaged, or unpolluted with the slime of their filthy offal.*

* Tristius haud illis monstrum, nec sævior ulla
Pestis et ira Deûm Stygiis sese extulit undis.
Virginei volucrum vultus, fœdissima ventris

If his Grace can contemplate the result of this complete innovation, or, as some friends of his will call it, *reform*, in the whole body of its solidity and compound mass, at which, as Hamlet says, the face of heaven glows with horror and indignation, and which, in truth, makes every reflecting mind and every feeling heart perfectly thought-sick, without a thorough abhorrence of everything they say and everything they do, I am amazed at the morbid strength or the natural infirmity of his mind.

It was, then, not my love, but my hatred to innovation, that produced my plan of reform. Without troubling myself with the exactness of the logical diagram, I considered them as things substantially opposite. It was to prevent that evil, that I proposed the measures which his Grace is pleased, and I am not sorry he is pleased, to recall to my recollection. I had (what I hope that noble Duke will remember in all his operations) a state to preserve, as well as a state to reform. I had a people to gratify, but not to inflame or to mislead. I do not claim half the credit for what I did as for what I prevented from being done. In that situation of the public mind, I did not undertake, as was then proposed, to new-model the House of Commons or the House of Lords, or

> Proluvies, uncæque manus, et pallida semper
> Ora fame.

Here the poet breaks the line, because he (and that *he* is Virgil) had not verse or language to describe that monster even as he had conceived her. Had he lived to our time, he would have been more overpowered with the reality than he was with the imagination. Virgil only knew the horror of the times before him. Had he lived to see the revolutionists and constitutionalists of France, he would have had more horrid and disgusting features of his harpies to describe, and more frequent failures in the attempt to describe them.

to change the authority under which any officer of the crown acted, who was suffered at all to exist. Crown, lords, commons, judicial system, system of administration, existed as they had existed before, and in the mode and manner in which they had always existed. My measures were, what I then truly stated them to the House to be, in their intent, healing and mediatorial. A complaint was made of too much influence in the House of Commons: I reduced it in both Houses; and I gave my reasons, article by article, for every reduction, and showed why I thought it safe for the service of the state. I heaved the lead every inch of way I made. A disposition to expense was complained of: to that I opposed, not mere retrenchment, but a system of economy, which would make a random expense, without plan or foresight, in future, not easily practicable. I proceeded upon principles of research to put me in possession of my matter, on principles of method to regulate it, and on principles in the human mind and in civil affairs to secure and perpetuate the operation. I conceived nothing arbitrarily, nor proposed anything to be done by the will and pleasure of others or my own, — but by reason, and by reason only. I have ever abhorred, since the first dawn of my understanding to this its obscure twilight, all the operations of opinion, fancy, inclination, and will, in the affairs of government, where only a sovereign reason, paramount to all forms of legislation and administration, should dictate. Government is made for the very purpose of opposing that reason to will and to caprice, in the reformers or in the reformed, in the governors or in the governed, in kings, in senates, or in people.

On a careful review, therefore, and analysis of all

the component parts of the civil list, and on weighing them against each other, in order to make as much as possible all of them a subject of estimate, (the foundation and corner-stone of all regular, provident economy,) it appeared to me evident that this was impracticable, whilst that part called the pension list was totally discretionary in its amount. For this reason, and for this only, I proposed to reduce it, both in its gross quantity and in its larger individual proportions, to a certainty; lest, if it were left without a *general* limit, it might eat up the civil list service, — if suffered to be granted in portions too great for the fund, it might defeat its own end, and, by unlimited allowances to some, it might disable the crown in means of providing for others. The pension list was to be kept as a sacred fund; but it could not be kept as a constant, open fund, sufficient for growing demands, if some demands would wholly devour it. The tenor of the act will show that it regarded the civil list *only*, the reduction of which to some sort of estimate was my great object.

No other of the crown funds did I meddle with, because they had not the same relations. This of the four and a half per cents does his Grace imagine had escaped me, or had escaped all the men of business who acted with me in those regulations? I knew that such a fund existed, and that pensions had been always granted on it, before his Grace was born. This fund was full in my eye. It was full in the eyes of those who worked with me. It was left on principle. On principle I did what was then done; and on principle what was left undone was omitted. I did not dare to rob the nation of all funds to reward merit. If I pressed this point too close, I acted

contrary to the avowed principles on which I went. Gentlemen are very fond of quoting me; but if any one thinks it worth his while to know the rules that guided me in my plan of reform, he will read my printed speech on that subject, at least what is contained from page 230 to page 241 in the second volume of the collection * which a friend has given himself the trouble to make of my publications. Be this as it may, these two bills (though achieved with the greatest labor, and management of every sort, both within and without the House) were only a part, and but a small part, of a very large system, comprehending all the objects I stated in opening my proposition, and, indeed, many more, which I just hinted at in my speech to the electors of Bristol, when I was put out of that representation. All these, in some state or other of forwardness, I have long had by me.

But do I justify his Majesty's grace on these grounds? I think them the least of my services. The time gave them an occasional value. What I have done in the way of political economy was far from confined to this body of measures. I did not come into Parliament to con my lesson. I had earned my pension before I set my foot in St. Stephen's Chapel. I was prepared and disciplined to this political warfare. The first session I sat in Parliament, I found it necessary to analyze the whole commercial, financial, constitutional, and foreign interests of Great Britain and its empire. A great deal was then done; and more, far more, would have been done, if more had been permitted by events. Then, in the vigor of my manhood, my constitution sunk under my labor.

* London, J. Dodsley, 1792, 3 vols. 4to. — Vol. II. pp. 324 – 336, in the present edition.

Had I then died, (and I seemed to myself very near death,) I had then earned for those who belonged to me more than the Duke of Bedford's ideas of service are of power to estimate. But, in truth, these services I am called to account for are not those on which I value myself the most. If I were to call for a reward, (which I have never done,) it should be for those in which for fourteen years without intermission I showed the most industry and had the least success: I mean in the affairs of India. They are those on which I value myself the most: most for the importance, most for the labor, most for the judgment, most for constancy and perseverance in the pursuit. Others may value them most for the *intention*. In that, surely, they are not mistaken.

Does his Grace think that they who advised the crown to make my retreat easy considered me only as an economist? That, well understood, however, is a good deal. If I had not deemed it of some value, I should not have made political economy an object of my humble studies from my very early youth to near the end of my service in Parliament, even before (at least to any knowledge of mine) it had employed the thoughts of speculative men in other parts of Europe. At that time it was still in its infancy in England, where, in the last century, it had its origin. Great and learned men thought my studies were not wholly thrown away, and deigned to communicate with me now and then on some particulars of their immortal works. Something of these studies may appear incidentally in some of the earliest things I published. The House has been witness to their effect, and has profited of them, more or less, for above eight-and-twenty years.

To their estimate I leave the matter. I was not, like his Grace of Bedford, swaddled and rocked and dandled into a legislator: "*Nitor in adversum*" is the motto for a man like me. I possessed not one of the qualities nor cultivated one of the arts that recommend men to the favor and protection of the great. I was not made for a minion or a tool. As little did I follow the trade of winning the hearts by imposing on the understandings of the people. At every step of my progress in life, (for in every step was I traversed and opposed,) and at every turnpike I met, I was obliged to show my passport, and again and again to prove my sole title to the honor of being useful to my country, by a proof that I was not wholly unacquainted with its laws and the whole system of its interests both abroad and at home. Otherwise, no rank, no toleration even, for me. I had no arts but manly arts. On them I have stood, and, please God, in spite of the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, to the last gasp will I stand.

Had his Grace condescended to inquire concerning the person whom he has not thought it below him to reproach, he might have found, that, in the whole course of my life, I have never, on any pretence of economy, or on any other pretence, so much as in a single instance, stood between any man and his reward of service or his encouragement in useful talent and pursuit, from the highest of those services and pursuits to the lowest. On the contrary, I have on an hundred occasions exerted myself with singular zeal to forward every man's even tolerable pretensions. I have more than once had good-natured reprehensions from my friends for carrying the matter to something bordering on abuse. This line of

conduct, whatever its merits might be, was partly owing to natural disposition, but I think full as much to reason and principle. I looked on the consideration of public service or public ornament to be real and very justice; and I ever held a scanty and penurious justice to partake of the nature of a wrong. I held it to be, in its consequences, the worst economy in the world. In saving money I soon can count up all the good I do; but when by a cold penury I blast the abilities of a nation, and stunt the growth of its active energies, the ill I may do is beyond all calculation. Whether it be too much or too little, whatever I have done has been general and systematic. I have never entered into those trifling vexations and oppressive details that have been falsely and most ridiculously laid to my charge.

Did I blame the pensions given to Mr. Barré and Mr. Dunning between the proposition and execution of my plan? No! surely, no! Those pensions were within my principles. I assert it, those gentlemen deserved their pensions, their titles, — all they had; and if more they had, I should have been but pleased the more. They were men of talents; they were men of service. I put the profession of the law out of the question in one of them. It is a service that rewards itself. But their *public service*, though from their abilities unquestionably of more value than mine, in its quantity and in its duration was not to be mentioned with it. But I never could drive a hard bargain in my life, concerning any matter whatever; and least of all do I know how to haggle and huckster with merit. Pension for myself I obtained none; nor did I solicit any. Yet I was loaded with hatred for everything that was withheld, and with obloquy

for everything that was given. I was thus left to support the grants of a name ever dear to me and ever venerable to the world in favor of those who were no friends of mine or of his, against the rude attacks of those who were at that time friends to the grantees and their own zealous partisans. I have never heard the Earl of Lauderdale complain of these pensions. He finds nothing wrong till he comes to me. This is impartiality, in the true, modern, revolutionary style.

Whatever I did at that time, so far as it regarded order and economy, is stable and eternal, as all principles must be. A particular order of things may be altered: order itself cannot lose its value. As to other particulars, they are variable by time and by circumstances. Laws of regulation are not fundamental laws. The public exigencies are the masters of all such laws. They rule the laws, and are not to be ruled by them. They who exercise the legislative power at the time must judge.

It may be new to his Grace, but I beg leave to tell him that mere parsimony is not economy. It is separable in theory from it; and in fact it may or it may not be a *part* of economy, according to circumstances. Expense, and great expense, may be an essential part in true economy. If parsimony were to be considered as one of the kinds of that virtue, there is, however, another and an higher economy. Economy is a distributive virtue, and consists, not in saving, but in selection. Parsimony requires no providence, no sagacity, no powers of combination, no comparison, no judgment. Mere instinct, and that not an instinct of the noblest kind, may produce this false economy in perfection. The other economy has larger views.

It demands a discriminating judgment, and a firm, sagacious mind. It shuts one door to impudent importunity, only to open another, and a wider, to unpresuming merit. If none but meritorious service or real talent were to be rewarded, this nation has not wanted, and this nation will not want, the means of rewarding all the service it ever will receive, and encouraging all the merit it ever will produce. No state, since the foundation of society, has been impoverished by that species of profusion. Had the economy of selection and proportion been at all times observed, we should not now have had an overgrown Duke of Bedford, to oppress the industry of humble men, and to limit, by the standard of his own conceptions, the justice, the bounty, or, if he pleases, the charity of the crown.

His Grace may think as meanly as he will of my deserts in the far greater part of my conduct in life. It is free for him to do so. There will always be some difference of opinion in the value of political services. But there is one merit of mine which he, of all men living, ought to be the last to call in question. I have supported with very great zeal, and I am told with some degree of success, those opinions, or, if his Grace likes another expression better, those old prejudices, which buoy up the ponderous mass of his nobility, wealth, and titles. I have omitted no exertion to prevent him and them from sinking to that level to which the meretricious French faction his Grace at least coquets with omit no exertion to reduce both. I have done all I could to discountenance their inquiries into the fortunes of those who hold large portions of wealth without any apparent merit of their own. I have strained every nerve to

keep the Duke of Bedford in that situation which alone makes him my superior. Your Lordship has been a witness of the use he makes of that preëminence.

But be it that this is virtue; be it that there is virtue in this well-selected rigor: yet all virtues are not equally becoming to all men and at all times. There are crimes, undoubtedly there are crimes, which in all seasons of our existence ought to put a generous antipathy in action, — crimes that provoke an indignant justice, and call forth a warm and animated pursuit. But all things that concern what I may call the preventive police of morality, all things merely rigid, harsh, and censorial, the antiquated moralists at whose feet I was brought up would not have thought these the fittest matter to form the favorite virtues of young men of rank. What might have been well enough, and have been received with a veneration mixed with awe and terror, from an old, severe, crabbed Cato, would have wanted something of propriety in the young Scipios, the ornament of the Roman nobility, in the flower of their life. But the times, the morals, the masters, the scholars, have all undergone a thorough revolution. It is a vile, illiberal school, this new French academy of the *sans-culottes*. There is nothing in it that is fit for a gentleman to learn.

Whatever its vogue may be, I still flatter myself that the parents of the growing generation will be satisfied with what is to be taught to their children in Westminster, in Eton, or in Winchester; I still indulge the hope that no *grown* gentleman or nobleman of our time will think of finishing at Mr. Thelwall's lecture whatever may have been left incomplete at the old universities of his country. I would give to Lord

Grenville and Mr. Pitt for a motto what was said of a Roman censor or prætor (or what was he?) who in virtue of a *Senatusconsultum* shut up certain academies, — "*Cludere ludum impudentiæ jussit.*" Every honest father of a family in the kingdom will rejoice at the breaking-up for the holidays, and will pray that there may be a very long vacation, in all such schools.

The awful state of the time, and not myself, or my own justification, is my true object in what I now write, or in what I shall ever write or say. It little signifies to the world what becomes of such things as me, or even as the Duke of Bedford. What I say about either of us is nothing more than a vehicle, as you, my Lord, will easily perceive, to convey my sentiments on matters far more worthy of your attention. It is when I stick to my apparent first subject that I ought to apologize, not when I depart from it. I therefore must beg your Lordship's pardon for again resuming it after this very short digression, — assuring you that I shall never altogether lose sight of such matter as persons abler than I am may turn to some profit.

The Duke of Bedford conceives that he is obliged to call the attention of the House of Peers to his Majesty's grant to me, which he considers as excessive and out of all bounds.

I know not how it has happened, but it really seems, that, whilst his Grace was meditating his well-considered censure upon me, he fell into a sort of sleep. Homer nods, and the Duke of Bedford may dream; and as dreams (even his golden dreams) are apt to be ill-pieced and incongruously put together, his Grace preserved his idea of reproach to *me*, but took the subject-matter from the crown

grants *to his own family*. This is "the stuff of which his dreams are made." In that way of putting things together his Grace is perfectly in the right. The grants to the House of Russell were so enormous as not only to outrage economy, but even to stagger credibility. The Duke of Bedford is the leviathan among all the creatures of the crown. He tumbles about his unwieldy bulk, he plays and frolics in the ocean of the royal bounty. Huge as he is, and whilst "he lies floating many a rood," he is still a creature. His ribs, his fins, his whalebone, his blubber, the very spiracles through which he spouts a torrent of brine against his origin, and covers me all over with the spray, everything of him and about him is from the throne. Is it for *him* to question the dispensation of the royal favor?

I really am at a loss to draw any sort of parallel between the public merits of his Grace, by which he justifies the grants he holds, and these services of mine, on the favorable construction of which I have obtained what his Grace so much disapproves. In private life I have not at all the honor of acquaintance with the noble Duke; but I ought to presume, and it costs me nothing to do so, that he abundantly deserves the esteem and love of all who live with him. But as to public service, why, truly, it would not be more ridiculous for me to compare myself, in rank, in fortune, in splendid descent, in youth, strength, or figure, with the Duke of Bedford, than to make a parallel between his services and my attempts to be useful to my country. It would not be gross adulation, but uncivil irony, to say that he has any public merit of his own to keep alive the idea of the services by which his vast landed

pensions were obtained. My merits, whatever they are, are original and personal: his are derivative. It is his ancestor, the original pensioner, that has laid up this inexhaustible fund of merit which makes his Grace so very delicate and exceptious about the merit of all other grantees of the crown. Had he permitted me to remain in quiet, I should have said, "'T is his estate: that's enough. It is his by law: what have I to do with it or its history?" He would naturally have said, on his side, "'T is this man's fortune. He is as good now as my ancestor was two hundred and fifty years ago. I am a young man with very old pensions; he is an old man with very young pensions: that's all."

Why will his Grace, by attacking me, force me reluctantly to compare my little merit with that which obtained from the crown those prodigies of profuse donation by which he tramples on the mediocrity of humble and laborious individuals? I would willingly leave him to the Herald's College, which the philosophy of the *sans-culottes* (prouder by far than all the Garters, and Norroys, and Clarencieux, and Rouge-Dragons that ever pranced in a procession of what his friends call aristocrats and despots) will abolish with contumely and scorn. These historians, recorders, and blazoners of virtues and arms differ wholly from that other description of historians who never assign any act of politicians to a good motive. These gentle historians, on the contrary, dip their pens in nothing but the milk of human kindness. They seek no further for merit than the preamble of a patent or the inscription on a tomb. With them every man created a peer is first an hero ready-made. They judge of every man's capacity for office by the

offices he has filled; and the more offices, the more ability. Every general officer with them is a Marlborough, every statesman a Burleigh, every judge a Murray or a Yorke. They who, alive, were laughed at or pitied by all their acquaintance make as good a figure as the best of them in the pages of Guillim, Edmondson, and Collins.

To these recorders, so full of good-nature to the great and prosperous, I would willingly leave the first Baron Russell and Earl of Bedford, and the merits of his grants. But the aulnager, the weigher, the meter of grants will not suffer us to acquiesce in the judgment of the prince reigning at the time when they were made. They are never good to those who earn them. Well, then, since the new grantees have war made on them by the old, and that the word of the sovereign is not to be taken, let us turn our eyes to history, in which great men have always a pleasure in contemplating the heroic origin of their house.

The first peer of the name, the first purchaser of the grants, was a Mr. Russell, a person of an ancient gentleman's family, raised by being a minion of Henry the Eighth. As there generally is some resemblance of character to create these relations, the favorite was in all likelihood much such another as his master. The first of those immoderate grants was not taken from the ancient demesne of the crown, but from the recent confiscation of the ancient nobility of the land. The lion, having sucked the blood of his prey, threw the offal carcass to the jackal in waiting. Having tasted once the food of confiscation, the favorites became fierce and ravenous. This worthy favorite's first grant was from

the lay nobility. The second, infinitely improving on the enormity of the first, was from the plunder of the Church. In truth, his Grace is somewhat excusable for his dislike to a grant like mine, not only in its quantity, but in its kind, so different from his own.

Mine was from a mild and benevolent sovereign: his from Henry the Eighth.

Mine had not its fund in the murder of any innocent person of illustrious rank,* or in the pillage of any body of unoffending men. His grants were from the aggregate and consolidated funds of judgments iniquitously legal, and from possessions voluntarily surrendered by the lawful proprietors with the gibbet at their door.

The merit of the grantee whom he derives from was that of being a prompt and greedy instrument of a *levelling* tyrant, who oppressed all descriptions of his people, but who fell with particular fury on everything that was *great and noble.* Mine has been in endeavoring to screen every man, in every class, from oppression, and particularly in defending the high and eminent, who, in the bad times of confiscating princes, confiscating chief governors, or confiscating demagogues, are the most exposed to jealousy, avarice, and envy.

The merit of the original grantee of his Grace's pensions was in giving his hand to the work, and partaking the spoil, with a prince who plundered a part of the national Church of his time and country. Mine was in defending the whole of the national Church of my own time and my own country,

* See the history of the melancholy catastrophe of the Duke of Buckingham. Temp. Hen. VIII.

and the whole of the national Churches of all countries, from the principles and the examples which lead to ecclesiastical pillage, thence to a contempt of *all* prescriptive titles, thence to the pillage of *all* property, and thence to universal desolation.

The merit of the origin of his Grace's fortune was in being a favorite and chief adviser to a prince who left no liberty to their native country. My endeavor was to obtain liberty for the municipal country in which I was born, and for all descriptions and denominations in it. Mine was to support with unrelaxing vigilance every right, every privilege, every franchise, in this my adopted, my dearer, and more comprehensive country; and not only to preserve those rights in this chief seat of empire, but in every nation, in every land, in every climate, language, and religion, in the vast domain that still is under the protection, and the larger that was once under the protection, of the British crown.

His founder's merits were, by arts in which he served his master and made his fortune, to bring poverty, wretchedness, and depopulation on his country. Mine were under a benevolent prince, in promoting the commerce, manufactures, and agriculture of his kingdom, — in which his Majesty shows an eminent example, who even in his amusements is a patriot, and in hours of leisure an improver of his native soil.

His founder's merit was the merit of a gentleman raised by the arts of a court and the protection of a Wolsey to the eminence of a great and potent lord. His merit in that eminence was, by instigating a tyrant to injustice, to provoke a people to rebellion. My merit was, to awaken the sober

part of the country, that they might put themselves on their guard against any one potent lord, or any greater number of potent lords, or any combination of great leading men of any sort, if ever they should attempt to proceed in the same courses, but in the reverse order, — that is, by instigating a corrupted populace to rebellion, and, through that rebellion, introducing a tyranny yet worse than the tyranny which his Grace's ancestor supported, and of which he profited in the manner we behold in the despotism of Henry the Eighth.

The political merit of the first pensioner of his Grace's house was that of being concerned as a counsellor of state in advising, and in his person executing, the conditions of a dishonorable peace with France, — the surrendering the fortress of Boulogne, then our outguard on the Continent. By that surrender, Calais, the key of France, and the bridle in the mouth of that power, was not many years afterwards finally lost. My merit has been in resisting the power and pride of France, under any form of its rule; but in opposing it with the greatest zeal and earnestness, when that rule appeared in the worst form it could assume, — the worst, indeed, which the prime cause and principle of all evil could possibly give it. It was my endeavor by every means to excite a spirit in the House, where I had the honor of a seat, for carrying on with early vigor and decision the most clearly just and necessary war that this or any nation ever carried on, in order to save my country from the iron yoke of its power, and from the more dreadful contagion of its principles, — to preserve, while they can be preserved, pure and untainted, the ancient, in-

bred integrity, piety, good-nature, and good-humor of the people of England, from the dreadful pestilence which, beginning in France, threatens to lay waste the whole moral and in a great degree the whole physical world, having done both in the focus of its most intense malignity.

The labors of his Grace's founder merited the "curses, not loud, but deep," of the Commons of England, on whom *he* and his master had effected a *complete Parliamentary Reform*, by making them, in their slavery and humiliation, the true and adequate representatives of a debased, degraded, and undone people. My merits were in having had an active, though not always an ostentatious share, in every one act, without exception, of undisputed constitutional utility in my time, and in having supported, on all occasions, the authority, the efficiency, and the privileges of the Commons of Great Britain. I ended my services by a recorded and fully reasoned assertion on their own journals of their constitutional rights, and a vindication of their constitutional conduct. I labored in all things to merit their inward approbation, and (along with the assistants of the largest, the greatest, and best of my endeavors) I received their free, unbiased, public, and solemn thanks.

Thus stands the account of the comparative merits of the crown grants which compose the Duke of Bedford's fortune as balanced against mine. In the name of common sense, why should the Duke of Bedford think that none but of the House of Russell are entitled to the favor of the crown? Why should he imagine that no king of England has been capable of judging of merit but King Henry the Eighth? Indeed, he will pardon me, he is a little mistaken: all

virtue did not end in the first Earl of Bedford; all discernment did not lose its vision when his creator closed his eyes. Let him remit his rigor on the disproportion between merit and reward in others, and they will make no inquiry into the origin of his fortune. They will regard with much more satisfaction, as he will contemplate with infinitely more advantage, whatever in his pedigree has been dulcified by an exposure to the influence of heaven in a long flow of generations from the hard, acidulous, metallic tincture of the spring. It is little to be doubted that several of his forefathers in that long series have degenerated into honor and virtue. Let the Duke of Bedford (I am sure he will) reject with scorn and horror the counsels of the lecturers, those wicked panders to avarice and ambition, who would tempt him, in the troubles of his country, to seek another enormous fortune from the forfeitures of another nobility and the plunder of another Church. Let him (and I trust that yet he will) employ all the energy of his youth and all the resources of his wealth to crush rebellious principles which have no foundation in morals, and rebellious movements that have no provocation in tyranny.

Then will be forgot the rebellions which, by a doubtful priority in crime, his ancestor had provoked and extinguished. On such a conduct in the noble Duke, many of his countrymen might, and with some excuse might, give way to the enthusiasm of their gratitude, and, in the dashing style of some of the old declaimers, cry out, that, if the Fates had found no other way in which they could give a * Duke of Bedford and his opulence as props to a tottering

* At si non aliam venturo fata Neroni, etc.

world, then the butchery of the Duke of Buckingham might be tolerated; it might be regarded even with complacency, whilst in the heir of confiscation they saw the sympathizing comforter of the martyrs who suffer under the cruel confiscation of this day, whilst they beheld with admiration his zealous protection of the virtuous and loyal nobility of France, and his manly support of his brethren, the yet standing nobility and gentry of his native land. Then his Grace's merit would be pure and new and sharp, as fresh from the mint of honor. As he pleased, he might reflect honor on his predecessors, or throw it forward on those who were to succeed him. He might be the propagator of the stock of honor, or the root of it, as he thought proper.

Had it pleased God to continue to me the hopes of succession, I should have been, according to my mediocrity and the mediocrity of the age I live in, a sort of founder of a family: I should have left a son, who, in all the points in which personal merit can be viewed, in science, in erudition, in genius, in taste, in honor, in generosity, in humanity, in every liberal sentiment and every liberal accomplishment, would not have shown himself inferior to the Duke of Bedford, or to any of those whom he traces in his line. His Grace very soon would have wanted all plausibility in his attack upon that provision which belonged more to mine than to me. He would soon have supplied every deficiency, and symmetrized every disproportion. It would not have been for that successor to resort to any stagnant, wasting reservoir of merit in me, or in any ancestry. He had in himself a salient, living spring of generous and manly action. Every day he lived he would have repurchased the

bounty of the crown, and ten times more, if ten times more he had received. He was made a public creature, and had no enjoyment whatever but in the performance of some duty. At this exigent moment the loss of a finished man is not easily supplied.

But a Disposer whose power we are little able to resist, and whose wisdom it behoves us not at all to dispute, has ordained it in another manner, and (whatever my querulous weakness might suggest) a far better. The storm has gone over me; and I lie like one of those old oaks which the late hurricane has scattered about me. I am stripped of all my honors, I am torn up by the roots, and lie prostrate on the earth. There, and prostrate there, I most unfeignedly recognize the Divine justice, and in some degree submit to it. But whilst I humble myself before God, I do not know that it is forbidden to repel the attacks of unjust and inconsiderate men. The patience of Job is proverbial. After some of the convulsive struggles of our irritable nature, he submitted himself, and repented in dust and ashes. But even so, I do not find him blamed for reprehending, and with a considerable degree of verbal asperity, those ill-natured neighbors of his who visited his dunghill to read moral, political, and economical lectures on his misery. I am alone. I have none to meet my enemies in the gate. Indeed, my Lord, I greatly deceive myself, if in this hard season I would give a peck of refuse wheat for all that is called fame and honor in the world. This is the appetite but of a few. It is a luxury, it is a privilege, it is an indulgence for those who are at their ease. But we are all of us made to shun disgrace, as we are made to shrink from pain and poverty

and disease. It is an instinct; and under the direction of reason, instinct is always in the right. I live in an inverted order. They who ought to have succeeded me are gone before me. They who should have been to me as posterity are in the place of ancestors. I owe to the dearest relation (which ever must subsist in memory) that act of piety which he would have performed to me: I owe it to him to show that he was not descended, as the Duke of Bedford would have it, from an unworthy parent.

The crown has considered me after long service: the crown has paid the Duke of Bedford by advance. He has had a long credit for any service which he may perform hereafter. He is secure, and long may he be secure, in his advance, whether he performs any services or not. But let him take care how he endangers the safety of that Constitution which secures his own utility or his own insignificance, or how he discourages those who take up even puny arms to defend an order of things which, like the sun of heaven, shines alike on the useful and the worthless. His grants are ingrafted on the public law of Europe, covered with the awful hoar of innumerable ages. They are guarded by the sacred rules of prescription, found in that full treasury of jurisprudence from which the jejuneness and penury of our municipal law has by degrees been enriched and strengthened. This prescription I had my share (a very full share) in bringing to its perfection.* The Duke of Bedford will stand as long as prescriptive law endures, — as long as the great, stable laws of property, common to us with all civilized nations, are kept in their integrity, and without the smallest in-

* Sir George Savile's act, called The *Nullum Tempus* Act

termixture of the laws, maxims, principles, or precedents of the Grand Revolution. They are secure against all changes but one. The whole Revolutionary system, institutes, digest, code, novels, text, gloss, comment, are not only not the same, but they are the very reverse, and the reverse fundamentally, of all the laws on which civil life has hitherto been upheld in all the governments of the world. The learned professors of the Rights of Man regard prescription not as a title to bar all claim set up against old possession, but they look on prescription as itself a bar against the possessor and proprietor. They hold an immemorial possession to be no more than a long continued and therefore an aggravated injustice.

Such are *their* ideas, such *their* religion, and such *their* law. But as to *our* country and *our* race, as long as the well-compacted structure of our Church and State, the sanctuary, the holy of holies of that ancient law, defended by reverence, defended by power, a fortress at once and a temple,* shall stand inviolate on the brow of the British Sion, — as long as the British monarchy, not more limited than fenced by the orders of the state, shall, like the proud Keep of Windsor, rising in the majesty of proportion, and girt with the double belt of its kindred and coëval towers, as long as this awful structure shall oversee and guard the subjected land, — so long the mounds and dikes of the low, fat, Bedford level will have nothing to fear from all the pickaxes of all the levellers of France. As long as our sovereign lord the king, and his faithful subjects, the lords and commons of this realm, — the triple cord which no man can break, — the solemn, sworn, con-

* "Templum in modum arcis." — TACITUS, of the temple of Jerusalem.

stitutional frank-pledge of this nation, — the firm guaranties of each other's being and each other's rights, — the joint and several securities, each in its place and order, for every kind and every quality of property and of dignity, — as long as these endure, so long the Duke of Bedford is safe, and we are all safe together, — the high from the blights of envy and the spoliations of rapacity, the low from the iron hand of oppression and the insolent spurn of contempt. Amen! and so be it! and so it will be, —

> Dum domus Æneæ Capitolî immobile saxum
> Accolet, imperiumque pater Romanus habebit.

But if the rude inroad of Gallic tumult, with its sophistical rights of man to falsify the account, and its sword as a make-weight to throw into the scale, shall be introduced into our city by a misguided populace, set on by proud great men, themselves blinded and intoxicated by a frantic ambition, we shall all of us perish and be overwhelmed in a common ruin. If a great storm blow on our coast, it will cast the whales on the strand, as well as the periwinkles. His Grace will not survive the poor grantee he despises, — no, not for a twelvemonth. If the great look for safety in the services they render to this Gallic cause, it is to be foolish even above the weight of privilege allowed to wealth. If his Grace be one of these whom they endeavor to proselytize, he ought to be aware of the character of the sect whose doctrines he is invited to embrace. With them insurrection is the most sacred of revolutionary duties to the state. Ingratitude to benefactors is the first of revolutionary virtues. Ingratitude is, indeed, their four cardinal virtues compacted and amalga-

mated into one; and he will find it in everything that has happened since the commencement of the philosophic Revolution to this hour. If he pleads the merit of having performed the duty of insurrection against the order he lives in, (God forbid he ever should!) the merit of others will be to perform the duty of insurrection against him. If he pleads (again God forbid he should, and I do not suspect he will) his ingratitude to the crown for its creation of his family, others will plead their right and duty to pay him in kind. They will laugh, indeed they will laugh, at his parchment and his wax. His deeds will be drawn out with the rest of the lumber of his evidence-room, and burnt to the tune of *Ça ira* in the courts of Bedford (then Equality) House.

Am I to blame, if I attempt to pay his Grace's hostile reproaches to me with a friendly admonition to himself? Can I be blamed for pointing out to him in what manner he is like to be affected, if the sect of the cannibal philosophers of France should proselytize any considerable part of this people, and, by their joint proselytizing arms, should conquer that government to which his Grace does not seem to me to give all the support his own security demands? Surely it is proper that he, and that others like him, should know the true genius of this sect, — what their opinions are, — what they have done, and to whom, — and what (if a prognostic is to be formed from the dispositions and actions of men) it is certain they will do hereafter. He ought to know that they have sworn assistance, the only engagement they ever will keep, to all in this country who bear a resemblance to themselves, and who think, as such,

that *the whole duty of man* consists in destruction. They are a misallied and disparaged branch of the House of Nimrod. They are the Duke of Bedford's natural hunters; and he is their natural game. Because he is not very profoundly reflecting, he sleeps in profound security: they, on the contrary, are always vigilant, active, enterprising, and, though far removed from any knowledge which makes men estimable or useful, in all the instruments and resources of evil their leaders are not meanly instructed or insufficiently furnished. In the French Revolution everything is new, and, from want of preparation to meet so unlooked-for an evil, everything is dangerous. Never before this time was a set of literary men converted into a gang of robbers and assassins; never before did a den of bravoes and banditti assume the garb and tone of an academy of philosophers.

Let me tell his Grace, that an union of such characters, monstrous as it seems, is not made for producing despicable enemies. But if they are formidable as foes, as friends they are dreadful indeed. The men of property in France, confiding in a force which seemed to be irresistible because it had never been tried, neglected to prepare for a conflict with their enemies at their own weapons. They were found in such a situation as the Mexicans were, when they were attacked by the dogs, the cavalry, the iron, and the gunpowder of an handful of bearded men, whom they did not know to exist in Nature. This is a comparison that some, I think, have made; and it is just. In France they had their enemies within their houses. They were even in the bosoms of many of them. But they had not sagacity to dis-

cern their savage character. They seemed tame, and even caressing. They had nothing but *douce humanité* in their mouth. They could not bear the punishment of the mildest laws on the greatest criminals. The slightest severity of justice made their flesh creep. The very idea that war existed in the world disturbed their repose. Military glory was no more, with them, than a splendid infamy. Hardly would they hear of self-defence, which they reduced within such bounds as to leave it no defence at all. All this while they meditated the confiscations and massacres we have seen. Had any one told these unfortunate noblemen and gentlemen how and by whom the grand fabric of the French monarchy under which they flourished would be subverted, they would not have pitied him as a visionary, but would have turned from him as what they call a *mauvais plaisant*. Yet we have seen what has happened. The persons who have suffered from the cannibal philosophy of France are so like the Duke of Bedford, that nothing but his Grace's probably not speaking quite so good French could enable us to find out any difference. A great many of them had as pompous titles as he, and were of full as illustrious a race; some few of them had fortunes as ample; several of them, without meaning the least disparagement to the Duke of Bedford, were as wise, and as virtuous, and as valiant, and as well educated, and as complete in all the lineaments of men of honor, as he is; and to all this they had added the powerful outguard of a military profession, which, in its nature, renders men somewhat more cautious than those who have nothing to attend to but the lazy enjoyment of undisturbed possessions. But security

was their ruin. They are dashed to pieces in the storm, and our shores are covered with the wrecks. If they had been aware that such a thing might happen, such a thing never could have happened.

I assure his Grace, that, if I state to him the designs of his enemies in a manner which may appear to him ludicrous and impossible, I tell him nothing that has not exactly happened, point by point, but twenty-four miles from our own shore. I assure him that the Frenchified faction, more encouraged than others are warned by what has happened in France, look at him and his landed possessions as an object at once of curiosity and rapacity. He is made for them in every part of their double character. As robbers, to them he is a noble booty; as speculatists, he is a glorious subject for their experimental philosophy. He affords matter for an extensive analysis in all the branches of their science, geometrical, physical, civil, and political. These philosophers are fanatics: independent of any interest, which, if it operated alone, would make them much more tractable, they are carried with such an headlong rage towards every desperate trial that they would sacrifice the whole human race to the slightest of their experiments. I am better able to enter into the character of this description of men than the noble Duke can be. I have lived long and variously in the world. Without any considerable pretensions to literature in myself, I have aspired to the love of letters. I have lived for a great many years in habitudes with those who professed them. I can form a tolerable estimate of what is likely to happen from a character chiefly dependent for fame and fortune on knowledge and talent, as well in its morbid and per-

verted state as in that which is sound and natural. Naturally, men so formed and finished are the first gifts of Providence to the world. But when they have once thrown off the fear of God, which was in all ages too often the case, and the fear of man, which is now the case, and when in that state they come to understand one another, and to act in corps, a more dreadful calamity cannot arise out of hell to scourge mankind. Nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough-bred metaphysician. It comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than to the frailty and passion of a man. It is like that of the Principle of Evil himself, incorporeal, pure, unmixed, dephlegmated, defecated evil. It is no easy operation to eradicate humanity from the human breast. What Shakspeare calls the "compunctious visitings of Nature" will sometimes knock at their hearts, and protest against their murderous speculations. But they have a means of compounding with their nature. Their humanity is not dissolved; they only give it a long prorogation. They are ready to declare that they do not think two thousand years too long a period for the good that they pursue. It is remarkable that they never see any way to their projected good but by the road of some evil. Their imagination is not fatigued with the contemplation of human suffering through the wild waste of centuries added to centuries of misery and desolation. Their humanity is at their horizon, — and, like the horizon, it always flies before them. The geometricians and the chemists bring, the one from the dry bones of their diagrams, and the other from the soot of their furnaces, dispositions that make them worse than indifferent about

those feelings and habitudes which are the supports of the moral world. Ambition is come upon them suddenly; they are intoxicated with it, and it has rendered them fearless of the danger which may from thence arise to others or to themselves. These philosophers consider men in their experiments no more than they do mice in an air-pump or in a recipient of mephitic gas. Whatever his Grace may think of himself, they look upon him, and everything that belongs to him, with no more regard than they do upon the whiskers of that little long-tailed animal that has been long the game of the grave, demure, insidious, spring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed philosophers, whether going upon two legs or upon four.

His Grace's landed possessions are irresistibly inviting to an agrarian experiment. They are a downright insult upon the rights of man. They are more extensive than the territory of many of the Grecian republics; and they are without comparison more fertile than most of them. There are now republics in Italy, in Germany, and in Switzerland, which do not possess anything like so fair and ample a domain. There is scope for seven philosophers to proceed in their analytical experiments upon Harrington's seven different forms of republics, in the acres of this one Duke. Hitherto they have been wholly unproductive to speculation, — fitted for nothing but to fatten bullocks, and to produce grain for beer, still more to stupefy the dull English understanding. Abbé Sieyès has whole nests of pigeon-holes full of constitutions ready-made, ticketed, sorted, and numbered, suited to every season and every fancy: some with the top of the pattern at the bottom, and some with the bottom at the top; some plain, some flow-

ered; some distinguished for their simplicity, others for their complexity; some of blood color, some of *boue de Paris;* some with directories, others without a direction; some with councils of elders and councils of youngsters, some without any council at all; some where the electors choose the representatives, others where the representatives choose the electors; some in long coats, and some in short cloaks; some with pantaloons, some without breeches; some with five-shilling qualifications, some totally unqualified. So that no constitution-fancier may go unsuited from his shop, provided he loves a pattern of pillage, oppression, arbitrary imprisonment, confiscation, exile, revolutionary judgment, and legalized premeditated murder, in any shapes into which they can be put. What a pity it is that the progress of experimental philosophy should be checked by his Grace's monopoly! Such are their sentiments, I assure him; such is their language, when they dare to speak; and such are their proceedings, when they have the means to act.

Their geographers and geometricians have been some time out of practice. It is some time since they have divided their own country into squares. That figure has lost the charms of its novelty. They want new lands for new trials. It is not only the geometricians of the Republic that find him a good subject: the chemists have bespoke him, after the geometricians have done with him. As the first set have an eye on his Grace's lands, the chemists are not less taken with his buildings. They consider mortar as a very anti-revolutionary invention, in its present state, but, properly employed, an admirable material for overturning all establishments. They have found that

the gunpowder of *ruins* is far the fittest for making other *ruins*, and so *ad infinitum*. They have calculated what quantity of matter convertible into nitre is to be found in Bedford House, in Woburn Abbey, and in what his Grace and his trustees have still suffered to stand of that foolish royalist, Inigo Jones, in Covent Garden. Churches, play-houses, coffee-houses, all alike, are destined to be mingled, and equalized, and blended into one common rubbish, — and, well sifted, and lixiviated, to crystallize into true, democratic, explosive, insurrectionary nitre. Their Academy *del Cimento*, (*per antiphrasin*,) with Morveau and Hassenfratz at its head, have computed that the brave *sans-culottes* may make war on all the aristocracy of Europe for a twelvemonth out of the rubbish of the Duke of Bedford's buildings.*

* There is nothing on which the leaders of the Republic one and indivisible value themselves more than on the chemical operations by which, through science, they convert the pride of aristocracy to an instrument of its own destruction, — on the operations by which they reduce the magnificent ancient country-seats of the nobility, decorated with the *feudal* titles of Duke, Marquis, or Earl, into magazines of what they call *revolutionary* gunpowder. They tell us, that hitherto things "had not yet been properly and in a *revolutionary* manner explored." — "The strong *chateaus*, those *feudal* fortresses, that *were ordered to be demolished*, attracted next the attention of your committee. *Nature* there had *secretly* regained her *rights*, and had produced saltpetre, for the *purpose*, as it should seem, *of facilitating the execution of your decree by preparing the means of destruction*. From these *ruins*, which *still frown* on the liberties of the Republic, we have extracted the means of producing good; and those piles which have hitherto glutted the *pride of despots*, and covered the plots of La Vendée, will soon furnish wherewithal to tame the traitors and to overwhelm the disaffected." — "The *rebellious cities*, also, have afforded a large quantity of saltpetre. *Commune Affranchie*" (that is, the noble city of Lyons, reduced in many parts to an heap of ruins) "and Toulon will pay a *second* tribute to our artillery." —*Report*, 1*st February*, 1794.

While the Morveaux and Priestleys are proceeding with these experiments upon the Duke of Bedford's houses, the Sieyès, and the rest of the analytical legislators and constitution-venders, are quite as busy in their trade of decomposing organization, in forming his Grace's vassals into primary assemblies, national guards, first, second, and third requisitioners, committees of research, conductors of the travelling guillotine, judges of revolutionary tribunals, legislative hangmen, supervisors of domiciliary visitation, exactors of forced loans, and assessors of the maximum.

The din of all this smithery may some time or other possibly wake this noble Duke, and push him to an endeavor to save some little matter from their experimental philosophy. If he pleads his grants from the crown, he is ruined at the outset. If he pleads he has received them from the pillage of superstitious corporations, this indeed will stagger them a little, because they are enemies to all corporations and to all religion. However, they will soon recover themselves, and will tell his Grace, or his learned council, that all such property belongs to the *nation*, — and that it would be more wise for him, if he wishes to live the natural term of a *citizen*, (that is, according to Condorcet's calculation, six months on an average,) not to pass for an usurper upon the national property. This is what the *serjeants*-at-law of the rights of man will say to the puny *apprentices* of the common law of England.

Is the genius of philosophy not yet known? You may as well think the garden of the Tuileries was well protected with the cords of ribbon insultingly stretched by the National Assembly to keep the sovereign *canaille* from intruding on the retirement of

the poor King of the French as that such flimsy cobwebs will stand between the savages of the Revolution and their natural prey. Deep philosophers are no triflers; brave *sans-culottes* are no formalists. They will no more regard a Marquis of Tavistock than an Abbot of Tavistock; the Lord of Woburn will not be more respectable in their eyes than the Prior of Woburn; they will make no difference between the superior of a Covent Garden of nuns and of a Covent Garden of another description. They will not care a rush whether his coat is long or short, — whether the color be purple, or blue and buff. They will not trouble *their* heads with what part of *his* head his hair is cut from; and they will look with equal respect on a tonsure and a crop. Their only question will be that of their Legendre, or some other of their legislative butchers: How he cuts up; how he tallows in the caul or on the kidneys.

Is it not a singular phenomenon, that, whilst the *sans-culotte* carcass-butchers and the philosophers of the shambles are pricking their dotted lines upon his hide, and, like the print of the poor ox that we see in the shop-windows at Charing Cross, alive as he is, and thinking no harm in the world, he is divided into rumps, and sirloins, and briskets, and into all sorts of pieces for roasting, boiling, and stewing, that, all the while they are measuring *him*, his Grace is measuring *me*, — is invidiously comparing the bounty of the crown with the deserts of the defender of his order, and in the same moment fawning on those who have the knife half out of the sheath? Poor innocent!

> "Pleased to the last, he crops the flowery food,
> And licks the hand just raised to shed his blood."

No man lives too long who lives to do with spirit and suffer with resignation what Providence pleases to command or inflict; but, indeed, they are sharp incommodities which beset old age. It was but the other day, that, on putting in order some things which had been brought here, on my taking leave of London forever, I looked over a number of fine portraits, most of them of persons now dead, but whose society, in my better days, made this a proud and happy place. Amongst these was the picture of Lord Keppel. It was painted by an artist worthy of the subject, the excellent friend of that excellent man from their earliest youth, and a common friend of us both, with whom we lived for many years without a moment of coldness, of peevishness, of jealousy, or of jar, to the day of our final separation.

I ever looked on Lord Keppel as one of the greatest and best men of his age, and I loved and cultivated him accordingly. He was much in my heart, and I believe I was in his to the very last beat. It was after his trial at Portsmouth that he gave me this picture. With what zeal and anxious affection I attended him through that his agony of glory, — what part my son, in the early flush and enthusiasm of his virtue, and the pious passion with which he attached himself to all my connections, — with what prodigality we both squandered ourselves in courting almost every sort of enmity for his sake, I believe he felt, just as I should have felt such friendship on such an occasion. I partook, indeed, of this honor with several of the first and best and ablest in the kingdom, but I was behindhand with none of them; and I am sure, that, if, to the eternal disgrace of this nation, and to the total annihilation of every

trace of honor and virtue in it, things had taken a different turn from what they did, I should have attended him to the quarter-deck with no less good-will and more pride, though with far other feelings, than I partook of the general flow of national joy that attended the justice that was done to his virtue.

Pardon, my Lord, the feeble garrulity of age, which loves to diffuse itself in discourse of the departed great. At my years we live in retrospect alone; and, wholly unfitted for the society of vigorous life, we enjoy, the best balm to all wounds, the consolation of friendship, in those only whom we have lost forever. Feeling the loss of Lord Keppel at all times, at no time did I feel it so much as on the first day when I was attacked in the House of Lords.

Had he lived, that reverend form would have risen in its place, and, with a mild, parental reprehension to his nephew, the Duke of Bedford, he would have told him that the favor of that gracious prince who had honored his virtues with the government of the navy of Great Britain, and with a seat in the hereditary great council of his kingdom, was not undeservedly shown to the friend of the best portion of his life, and his faithful companion and counsellor under his rudest trials. He would have told him, that, to whomever else these reproaches might be becoming, they were not decorous in his near kindred. He would have told him, that, when men in that rank lose decorum, they lose everything.

On that day I had a loss in Lord Keppel. But the public loss of him in this awful crisis! — I speak from much knowledge of the person: he never would have listened to any compromise with the rabble rout

of this *sans-culotterie* of France. His goodness of heart, his reason, his taste, his public duty, his principles, his prejudices, would have repelled him forever from all connection with that horrid medley of madness, vice, impiety, and crime.

Lord Keppel had two countries: one of descent, and one of birth. Their interest and their glory are the same; and his mind was capacious of both. His family was noble, and it was Dutch: that is, he was of the oldest and purest nobility that Europe can boast, among a people renowned above all others for love of their native land. Though it was never shown in insult to any human being, Lord Keppel was something high. It was a wild stock of pride, on which the tenderest of all hearts had grafted the milder virtues. He valued ancient nobility; and he was not disinclined to augment it with new honors. He valued the old nobility and the new, not as an excuse for inglorious sloth, but as an incitement to virtuous activity. He considered it as a sort of cure for selfishness and a narrow mind, — conceiving that a man born in an elevated place in himself was nothing, but everything in what went before and what was to come after him. Without much speculation, but by the sure instinct of ingenuous feelings, and by the dictates of plain, unsophisticated, natural understanding, he felt that no great commonwealth could by any possibility long subsist without a body of some kind or other of nobility decorated with honor and fortified by privilege. This nobility forms the chain that connects the ages of a nation, which otherwise (with Mr. Paine) would soon be taught that no one generation can bind another. He felt that no political fabric could be well made, without some such order of

things as might, through a series of time, afford a rational hope of securing unity, coherence, consistency, and stability to the state. He felt that nothing else can protect it against the levity of courts and the greater levity of the multitude; that to talk of hereditary monarchy, without anything else of hereditary reverence in the commonwealth, was a low-minded absurdity, fit only for those detestable "fools aspiring to be knaves" who began to forge in 1789 the false money of the French Constitution; that it is one fatal objection to all *new* fancied and *new fabricated* republics, (among a people who, once possessing such an advantage, have wickedly and insolently rejected it,) that the *prejudice* of an old nobility is a thing that *cannot* be made. It may be improved, it may be corrected, it may be replenished; men may be taken from it or aggregated to it; but *the thing itself* is matter of *inveterate* opinion, and therefore *cannot* be matter of mere positive institution. He felt that this nobility, in fact, does not exist in wrong of other orders of the state, but by them, and for them.

I knew the man I speak of: and if we can divine the future out of what we collect from the past, no person living would look with more scorn and horror on the impious parricide committed on all their ancestry, and on the desperate attainder passed on all their posterity, by the Orléans, and the Rochefoucaults, and the Fayettes, and the Vicomtes de Noailles, and the false Périgords, and the long *et cetera* of the perfidious *sans-culottes* of the court, who, like demoniacs possessed with a spirit of fallen pride and inverted ambition, abdicated their dignities, disowned their families, betrayed the most sacred of all trusts, and, by breaking to pieces a great link of society and

all the cramps and holdings of the state, brought eternal confusion and desolation on their country. For the fate of the miscreant parricides themselves he would have had no pity. Compassion for the myriads of men, of whom the world was not worthy, who by their means have perished in prisons or on scaffolds, or are pining in beggary and exile, would leave no room in his, or in any well-formed mind, for any such sensation. We are not made at once to pity the oppressor and the oppressed.

Looking to his Batavian descent, how could he bear to behold his kindred, the descendants of the brave nobility of Holland, whose blood, prodigally poured out, had, more than all the canals, meres, and inundations of their country, protected their independence, to behold them bowed in the basest servitude to the basest and vilest of the human race, — in servitude to those who in no respect were superior in dignity or could aspire to a better place than that of hangmen to the tyrants to whose sceptred pride they had opposed an elevation of soul that surmounted and overpowered the loftiness of Castile, the haughtiness of Austria, and the overbearing arrogance of France?

Could he with patience bear that the children of that nobility who would have deluged their country and given it to the sea rather than submit to Louis the Fourteenth, who was then in his meridian glory, when his arms were conducted by the Turennes, by the Luxembourgs, by the Boufflers, when his councils were directed by the Colberts and the Louvois, when his tribunals were filled by the Lamoignons and the D'Aguesseaus, — that these should be given up to the cruel sport of the Pichegrus, the Jourdans, the Santerres, under the Rolands, and Brissots, and Gorsas,

and Robespierres, the Reubells, the Carnots, and Talliens, and Dantons, and the whole tribe of regicides, robbers, and revolutionary judges, that from the rotten carcass of their own murdered country have poured out innumerable swarms of the lowest and at once the most destructive of the classes of animated Nature, which like columns of locusts have laid waste the fairest part of the world?

Would Keppel have borne to see the ruin of the virtuous patricians, that happy union of the noble and the burgher, who with signal prudence and integrity had long governed the cities of the confederate republic, the cherishing fathers of their country, who, denying commerce to themselves, made it flourish in a manner unexampled under their protection? Could Keppel have borne that a vile faction should totally destroy this harmonious construction, in favor of a robbing democracy founded on the spurious rights of man?

He was no great clerk, but he was perfectly well versed in the interests of Europe, and he could not have heard with patience that the country of Grotius, the cradle of the law of nations, and one of the richest repositories of all law, should be taught a new code by the ignorant flippancy of Thomas Paine, the presumptuous foppery of La Fayette, with his stolen rights of man in his hand, the wild, profligate intrigue and turbulency of Marat, and the impious sophistry of Condorcet, in his insolent addresses to the Batavian Republic.

Could Keppel, who idolized the House of Nassau, who was himself given to England along with the blessings of the British and Dutch Revolutions, with Revolutions of stability, with Revolutions which con-

solidated and married the liberties and the interests of the two nations forever, — could he see the fountain of British liberty itself in servitude to France? Could he see with patience a Prince of Orange expelled, as a sort of diminutive despot, with every kind of contumely, from the country which that family of deliverers had so often rescued from slavery, and obliged to live in exile in another country, which owes its liberty to his house?

Would Keppel have heard with patience that the conduct to be held on such occasions was to become short by the knees to the faction of the homicides, to entreat them quietly to retire? or, if the fortune of war should drive them from their first wicked and unprovoked invasion, that no security should be taken, no arrangement made, no barrier formed, no alliance entered into for the security of that which under a foreign name is the most precious part of England? What would he have said, if it was even proposed that the Austrian Netherlands (which ought to be a barrier to Holland, and the tie of an alliance to protect her against any species of rule that might be erected or even be restored in France) should be formed into a republic under her influence and dependent upon her power?

But above all, what would he have said, if he had heard it made a matter of accusation against me, by his nephew, the Duke of Bedford, that I was the author of the war? Had I a mind to keep that high distinction to myself, (as from pride I might, but from justice I dare not,) he would have snatched his share of it from my hand, and held it with the grasp of a dying convulsion to his end.

It would be a most arrogant presumption in me

to assume to myself the glory of what belongs to his Majesty, and to his ministers, and to his Parliament, and to the far greater majority of his faithful people: but had I stood alone to counsel, and that all were determined to be guided by my advice, and to follow it implicitly, then I should have been the sole author of a war. But it should have been a war on my ideas and my principles. However, let his Grace think as he may of my demerits with regard to the war with Regicide, he will find my guilt confined to that alone. He never shall, with the smallest color of reason, accuse me of being the author of a peace with Regicide. — But that is high matter, and ought not to be mixed with anything of so little moment as what may belong to me, or even to the Duke of Bedford.

I have the honor to be, &c.

EDMUND BURKE.

# THREE LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO

A MEMBER OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT,

ON THE

PROPOSALS FOR PEACE WITH THE REGICIDE DIRECTORY OF FRANCE.

1796-7.

# LETTER I.

## ON THE OVERTURES OF PEACE.

MY DEAR SIR, — Our last conversation, though not in the tone of absolute despondency, was far from cheerful. We could not easily account for some unpleasant appearances. They were represented to us as indicating the state of the popular mind; and they were not at all what we should have expected from our old ideas even of the faults and vices of the English character. The disastrous events which have followed one upon another in a long, unbroken, funereal train, moving in a procession that seemed to have no end, — these were not the principal causes of our dejection. We feared more from what threatened to fail within than what menaced to oppress us from abroad. To a people who have once been proud and great, and great because they were proud, a change in the national spirit is the most terrible of all revolutions.

I shall not live to behold the unravelling of the intricate plot which saddens and perplexes the awful drama of Providence now acting on the moral theatre of the world. Whether for thought or for action, I am at the end of my career. You are in the middle of yours. In what part of its orbit the nation with which we are carried along moves at this instant it is not easy to conjecture. It may, per-

haps, be far advanced in its aphelion, — but when to return?

Not to lose ourselves in the infinite void of the conjectural world, our business is with what is likely to be affected, for the better or the worse, by the wisdom or weakness of our plans. In all speculations upon men and human affairs, it is of no small moment to distinguish things of accident from permanent causes, and from effects that cannot be altered. It is not every irregularity in our movement that is a total deviation from our course. I am not quite of the mind of those speculators who seem assured that necessarily, and by the constitution of things, all states have the same periods of infancy, manhood, and decrepitude that are found in the individuals who compose them. Parallels of this sort rather furnish similitudes to illustrate or to adorn than supply analogies from whence to reason. The objects which are attempted to be forced into an analogy are not found in the same classes of existence. Individuals are physical beings, subject to laws universal and invariable. The immediate cause acting in these laws may be obscure: the general results are subjects of certain calculation. But commonwealths are not physical, but moral essences. They are artificial combinations, and, in their proximate efficient cause, the arbitrary productions of the human mind. We are not yet acquainted with the laws which necessarily influence the stability of that kind of work made by that kind of agent. There is not in the physical order (with which they do not appear to hold any assignable connection) a distinct cause by which any of those fabrics must necessarily grow, flourish, or decay; nor, in my opinion, does

the moral world produce anything more determinate on that subject than what may serve as an amusement (liberal, indeed, and ingenious, but still only an amusement) for speculative men. I doubt whether the history of mankind is yet complete enough, if ever it can be so, to furnish grounds for a sure theory on the internal causes which necessarily affect the fortune of a state. I am far from denying the operation of such causes: but they are infinitely uncertain, and much more obscure, and much more difficult to trace, than the foreign causes that tend to raise, to depress, and sometimes to overwhelm a community.

It is often impossible, in these political inquiries, to find any proportion between the apparent force of any moral causes we may assign and their known operation. We are therefore obliged to deliver up that operation to mere chance, or, more piously, (perhaps more rationally,) to the occasional interposition and irresistible hand of the Great Disposer. We have seen states of considerable duration, which for ages have remained nearly as they have begun, and could hardly be said to ebb or flow. Some appear to have spent their vigor at their commencement. Some have blazed out in their glory a little before their extinction. The meridian of some has been the most splendid. Others, and they the greatest number, have fluctuated, and experienced at different periods of their existence a great variety of fortune. At the very moment when some of them seemed plunged in unfathomable abysses of disgrace and disaster, they have suddenly emerged. They have begun a new course and opened a new reckoning, and even in the depths of their calamity and on

the very ruins of their country have laid the foundations of a towering and durable greatness. All this has happened without any apparent previous change in the general circumstances which had brought on their distress. The death of a man at a critical juncture, his disgust, his retreat, his disgrace, have brought innumerable calamities on a whole nation. A common soldier, a child, a girl at the door of an inn, have changed the face of fortune, and almost of Nature.

Such, and often influenced by such causes, has commonly been the fate of monarchies of long duration. They have their ebbs and their flows. This has been eminently the fate of the monarchy of France. There have been times in which no power has ever been brought so low. Few have ever flourished in greater glory. By turns elevated and depressed, that power had been, on the whole, rather on the increase; and it continued not only powerful, but formidable, to the hour of the total ruin of the monarchy. This fall of the monarchy was far from being preceded by any exterior symptoms of decline. The interior were not visible to every eye; and a thousand accidents might have prevented the operation of what the most clear-sighted were not able to discern nor the most provident to divine. A very little time before its dreadful catastrophe, there was a kind of exterior splendor in the situation of the crown, which usually adds to government strength and authority at home. The crown seemed then to have obtained some of the most splendid objects of state ambition. None of the Continental powers of Europe were the enemies of France. They were all either tacitly disposed to her or publicly connected

with her; and in those who kept the most aloof there was little appearance of jealousy, — of animosity there was no appearance at all. The British nation, her great preponderating rival, she had humbled, to all appearance she had weakened, certainly had endangered, by cutting off a very large and by far the most growing part of her empire. In that its acme of human prosperity and greatness, in the high and palmy state of the monarchy of France, it fell to the ground without a struggle. It fell without any of those vices in the monarch which have sometimes been the causes of the fall of kingdoms, but which existed, without any visible effect on the state, in the highest degree in many other princes, and, far from destroying their power, had only left some slight stains on their character. The financial difficulties were only pretexts and instruments of those who accomplished the ruin of that monarchy; they were not the causes of it.

Deprived of the old government, deprived in a manner of all government, France, fallen as a monarchy, to common speculators might have appeared more likely to be an object of pity or insult, according to the disposition of the circumjacent powers, than to be the scourge and terror of them all: but out of the tomb of the murdered monarchy in France has arisen a vast, tremendous, unformed spectre, in a far more terrific guise than any which ever yet have overpowered the imagination and subdued the fortitude of man. Going straight forward to its end, unappalled by peril, unchecked by remorse, despising all common maxims and all common means, that hideous phantom overpowered those who could not believe it was possible she could at all exist, except

on the principles which habit rather than Nature had persuaded them were necessary to their own particular welfare and to their own ordinary modes of action. But the constitution of any political being, as well as that of any physical being, ought to be known, before one can venture to say what is fit for its conservation, or what is the proper means of its power. The poison of other states is the food of the new Republic. That bankruptcy, the very apprehension of which is one of the causes assigned for the fall of the monarchy, was the capital on which she opened her traffic with the world.

The Republic of Regicide, with an annihilated revenue, with defaced manufactures, with a ruined commerce, with an uncultivated and half-depopulated country, with a discontented, distressed, enslaved, and famished people, passing, with a rapid, eccentric, incalculable course, from the wildest anarchy to the sternest despotism, has actually conquered the finest parts of Europe, has distressed, disunited, deranged, and broke to pieces all the rest, and so subdued the minds of the rulers in every nation, that hardly any resource presents itself to them, except that of entitling themselves to a contemptuous mercy by a display of their imbecility and meanness. Even in their greatest military efforts, and the greatest display of their fortitude, they seem not to hope, they do not even appear to wish, the extinction of what subsists to their certain ruin. Their ambition is only to be admitted to a more favored class in the order of servitude under that domineering power.

This seems the temper of the day. At first the French force was too much despised. Now it is too much dreaded. As inconsiderate courage has given

way to irrational fear, so it may be hoped, that, through the medium of deliberate, sober apprehension, we may arrive at steady fortitude. Who knows whether indignation may not succeed to terror, and the revival of high sentiment, spurning away the delusion of a safety purchased at the expense of glory, may not yet drive us to that generous despair which has often subdued distempers in the state for which no remedy could be found in the wisest councils?

Other great states having been without any regular, certain course of elevation or decline, we may hope that the British fortune may fluctuate also; because the public mind, which greatly influences that fortune, may have its changes. We are therefore never authorized to abandon our country to its fate, or to act or advise as if it had no resource. There is no reason to apprehend, because ordinary means threaten to fail, that no others can spring up. Whilst our heart is whole, it will find means, or make them. The heart of the citizen is a perennial spring of energy to the state. Because the pulse seems to intermit, we must not presume that it will cease instantly to beat. The public must never be regarded as incurable. I remember, in the beginning of what has lately been called the Seven Years' War, that an eloquent writer and ingenious speculator, Dr. Brown, upon some reverses which happened in the beginning of that war, published an elaborate philosophical discourse to prove that the distinguishing features of the people of England had been totally changed, and that a frivolous effeminacy was become the national character. Nothing could be more popular than that work. It was thought a great consolation to us, the light people of this country, (who were and are light,

but who were not and are not effeminate,) that we had found the causes of our misfortunes in our vices. Pythagoras could not be more pleased with his leading discovery. But whilst, in that splenetic mood, we amused ourselves in a sour, critical speculation, of which we were ourselves the objects, and in which every man lost his particular sense of the public disgrace in the epidemic nature of the distemper, — whilst, as in the Alps, goitre kept goitre in countenance, — whilst we were thus abandoning ourselves to a direct confession of our inferiority to France, and whilst many, very many, were ready to act upon a sense of that inferiority, — a few months effected a total change in our variable minds. We emerged from the gulf of that speculative despondency, and were buoyed up to the highest point of practical vigor. Never did the masculine spirit of England display itself with more energy, nor ever did its genius soar with a prouder preëminence over France, than at the time when frivolity and effeminacy had been at least tacitly acknowledged as their national character by the good people of this kingdom.

For one, (if they be properly treated,) I despair neither of the public fortune nor of the public mind. There is much to be done, undoubtedly, and much to be retrieved. We must walk in new ways, or we can never encounter our enemy in his devious march. We are not at an end of our struggle, nor near it. Let us not deceive ourselves: we are at the begin ning of great troubles. I readily acknowledge that the state of public affairs is infinitely more unprom ising than at the period I have just now alluded to and the position of all the powers of Europe, in relation to us, and in relation to each other, is more in-

tricate and critical beyond all comparison. Difficult indeed is our situation. In all situations of difficulty, men will be influenced in the part they take, not only by the reason of the case, but by the peculiar turn of their own character. The same ways to safety do not present themselves to all men, nor to the same men in different tempers. There is a courageous wisdom: there is also a false, reptile prudence, the result, not of caution, but of fear. Under misfortunes, it often happens that the nerves of the understanding are so relaxed, the pressing peril of the hour so completely confounds all the faculties, that no future danger can be properly provided for, can be justly estimated, can be so much as fully seen. The eye of the mind is dazzled and vanquished. An abject distrust of ourselves, an extravagant admiration of the enemy, present us with no hope but in a compromise with his pride by a submission to his will. This short plan of policy is the only counsel which will obtain a hearing. We plunge into a dark gulf with all the rash precipitation of fear. The nature of courage is, without a question, to be conversant with danger: but in the palpable night of their terrors, men under consternation suppose, not that it is the danger which by a sure instinct calls out the courage to resist it, but that it is the courage which produces the danger. They therefore seek for a refuge from their fears in the fears themselves, and consider a temporizing meanness as the only source of safety.

The rules and definitions of prudence can rarely be exact, never universal. I do not deny, that, in small, truckling states, a timely compromise with power has often been the means, and the only means, of drawling out their puny existence; but a great

state is too much envied, too much dreaded, to find safety in humiliation. To be secure, it must be respected. Power and eminence and consideration are things not to be begged; they must be commanded: and they who supplicate for mercy from others can never hope for justice through themselves. What justice they are to obtain, as the alms of an enemy, depends upon his character; and that they ought well to know before they implicitly confide.

Much controversy there has been in Parliament, and not a little amongst us out of doors, about the instrumental means of this nation towards the maintenance of her dignity and the assertion of her rights. On the most elaborate and correct detail of facts, the result seems to be, that at no time has the wealth and power of Great Britain been so considerable as it is at this very perilous moment. We have a vast interest to preserve, and we possess great means of preserving it: but it is to be remembered that the artificer may be incumbered by his tools, and that resources may be among impediments. If wealth is the obedient and laborious slave of virtue and of public honor, then wealth is in its place and has its use; but if this order is changed, and honor is to be sacrificed to the conservation of riches, riches, which have neither eyes nor hands, nor anything truly vital in them, cannot long survive the being of their vivifying powers, their legitimate masters, and their potent protectors. If we command our wealth, we shall be rich and free: if our wealth commands us, we are poor indeed. We are bought by the enemy with the treasure from our own coffers. Too great a sense of the value of a subordinate interest may be the very source of its danger, as well as the certain ruin of interests of a su-

perior order. Often has a man lost his all because he would not submit to hazard all in defending it. A display of our wealth before robbers is not the way to restrain their boldness or to lessen their rapacity. This display is made, I know, to persuade the people of England that thereby we shall awe the enemy and improve the terms of our capitulation: it is made, not that we should fight with more animation, but that we should supplicate with better hopes. We are mistaken. We have an enemy to deal with who never regarded our contest as a measuring and weighing of purses. He is the Gaul that puts his *sword* into the scale. He is more tempted with our wealth as booty than terrified with it as power. But let us be rich or poor, let us be either in what proportion we may, Nature is false or this is true, that, where the essential public force (of which money is but a part) is in any degree upon a par in a conflict between nations, that state which is resolved to hazard its existence rather than to abandon its objects must have an infinite advantage over that which is resolved to yield rather than to carry its resistance beyond a certain point. Humanly speaking, that people which bounds its efforts only with its being must give the law to that nation which will not push its opposition beyond its convenience.

If we look to nothing but our domestic condition, the state of the nation is full even to plethora; but if we imagine that this country can long maintain its blood and its food as disjoined from the community of mankind, such an opinion does not deserve refutation as absurd, but pity as insane.

I do not know that such an improvident and stupid selfishness deserves the discussion which perhaps

I may bestow upon it hereafter. We cannot arrange with our enemy, in the present conjuncture, without abandoning the interest of mankind. If we look only to our own petty *peculium* in the war, we have had some advantages, — advantages ambiguous in their nature, and dearly bought. We have not in the slightest degree impaired the strength of the common enemy in any one of those points in which his particular force consists, — at the same time that new enemies to ourselves, new allies to the Regicide Republic, have been made out of the wrecks and fragments of the general confederacy. So far as to the selfish part. As composing a part of the community of Europe, and interested in its fate, it is not easy to conceive a state of things more doubtful and perplexing. When Louis the Fourteenth had made himself master of one of the largest and most important provinces of Spain, — when he had in a manner overrun Lombardy, and was thundering at the gates of Turin, — when he had mastered almost all Germany on this side the Rhine, — when he was on the point of ruining the august fabric of the Empire, — when, with the Elector of Bavaria in his alliance, hardly anything interposed between him and Vienna, — when the Turk hung with a mighty force over the Empire on the other side, — I do not know that in the beginning of 1704 (that is, in the third year of the renovated war with Louis the Fourteenth) the state of Europe was so truly alarming. To England it certainly was not. Holland (and Holland is a matter to England of value inestimable) was then powerful, was then independent, and, though greatly endangered, was then full of energy and spirit. But the great resource of Europe was in England: not in a sort of England

detached from the rest of the world, and amusing herself with the puppet-show of a naval power, (it can be no better, whilst all the sources of that power, and of every sort of power, are precarious,) but in that sort of England who considered herself as embodied with Europe, but in that sort of England who, sympathetic with the adversity or the happiness of mankind, felt that nothing in human affairs was foreign to her. We may consider it as a sure axiom, that, as, on the one hand, no confederacy of the least effect or duration can exist against France, of which England is not only a part, but the head, so neither can England pretend to cope with France but as connected with the body of Christendom.

Our account of the war, *as a war of communion*, to the very point in which we began to throw out lures, oglings, and glances for peace, was a war of disaster, and of little else. The independent advantages obtained by us at the beginning of the war, and which were made at the expense of that common cause, if they deceive us about our largest and our surest interest, are to be reckoned amongst our heaviest losses.

The Allies, and Great Britain amongst the rest, (and perhaps amongst the foremost,) have been miserably deluded by this great, fundamental error: that it was in our power to make peace with this monster of a state, whenever we chose to forget the crimes that made it great and the designs that made it formidable. People imagined that their ceasing to resist was the sure way to be secure. This "pale cast of thought" sicklied over all their enterprises, and turned all their politics awry. They could not, or rather they would not, read, in the most unequivocal

declarations of the enemy, and in his uniform conduct, that more safety was to be found in the most arduous war than in the friendship of that kind of being. Its hostile amity can be obtained on no terms that do not imply an inability hereafter to resist its designs. This great, prolific error (I mean that peace was always in our power) has been the cause that rendered the Allies indifferent about the *direction* of the war, and persuaded them that they might always risk a choice and even a change in its objects. They seldom improved any advantage, — hoping that the enemy, affected by it, would make a proffer of peace. Hence it was that all their early victories have been followed almost immediately with the usual effects of a defeat, whilst all the advantages obtained by the Regicides have been followed by the consequences that were natural. The discomfitures which the Republic of Assassins has suffered have uniformly called forth new exertions, which not only repaired old losses, but prepared new conquests. The losses of the Allies, on the contrary, (no provision having been made on the speculation of such an event,) have been followed by desertion, by dismay, by disunion, by a dereliction of their policy, by a flight from their principles, by an admiration of the enemy, by mutual accusations, by a distrust in every member of the Alliance of its fellow, of its cause, its power, and its courage.

Great difficulties in consequence of our erroneous policy, as I have said, press upon every side of us. Far from desiring to conceal or even to palliate the evil in the representation, I wish to lay it down as my foundation, that never greater existed. In a moment when sudden panic is apprehended, it may be

wise for a while to conceal some great public disaster, or to reveal it by degrees, until the minds of the people have time to be re-collected, that their understanding may have leisure to rally, and that more steady councils may prevent their doing something desperate under the first impressions of rage or terror. But with regard to a *general* state of things, growing out of events and causes already known in the gross, there is no piety in the fraud that covers its true nature; because nothing but erroneous resolutions can be the result of false representations. Those measures, which in common distress might be available, in greater are no better than playing with the evil. That the effort may bear a proportion to the exigence, it is fit it should be known, — known in its quality, in its extent, and in all the circumstances which attend it. Great reverses of fortune there have been, and great embarrassments in council: a principled regicide enemy possessed of the most important part of Europe, and struggling for the rest; within ourselves a total relaxation of all authority, whilst a cry is raised against it, as if it were the most ferocious of all despotism. A worse phenomenon: our government disowned by the most efficient member of its tribunals, — ill-supported by any of their constituent parts, — and the highest tribunal of all (from causes not for our present purpose to examine) deprived of all that dignity and all that efficiency which might enforce, or regulate, or, if the case required it, might supply the want of every other court. Public prosecutions are become little better than schools for treason, — of no use but to improve the dexterity of criminals in the mystery of evasion, or to show with what complete impunity men may

conspire against the commonwealth, with what safety assassins may attempt its awful head. Everything is secure, except what the laws have made sacred; everything is tameness and languor that is not fury and faction. Whilst the distempers of a relaxed fibre prognosticate and prepare all the morbid force of convulsion in the body of the state, the steadiness of the physician is overpowered by the very aspect of the disease.* The doctor of the Constitution, pretending to underrate what he is not able to contend with, shrinks from his own operation. He doubts and questions the salutary, but critical, terrors of the cautery and the knife. He takes a poor credit even from his defeat, and covers impotence under the mask of lenity. He praises the moderation of the laws, as in his hands he sees them baffled and despised. Is all this because in our day the statutes of the kingdom are not engrossed in as firm a character and imprinted in as black and legible a type as ever? No! the law is a clear, but it is a dead letter. Dead and putrid, it is insufficient to save the state, but potent to infect and to kill. Living law, full of reason, and of equity and justice, (as it is, or it should not exist,) ought to be severe, and awful too, — or the words of menace, whether written on the parchment roll of England or cut into the brazen tablet of Rome, will excite nothing but contempt. How comes it that in all the state prosecutions of magnitude, from the Revolution to within these two or three years, the crown has scarcely ever retired disgraced and defeated from its courts? Whence this alarming change? By a connection easily felt, and not impossible to be traced to its cause, all the parts of the state have

* "Mussabat tacito medicina timore."

their correspondence and consent. They who bow to the enemy abroad will not be of power to subdue the conspirator at home. It is impossible not to observe, that, in proportion as we approximate to the poisonous jaws of anarchy, the fascination grows irresistible. In proportion as we are attracted towards the focus of illegality, irreligion, and desperate enterprise, all the venomous and blighting insects of the state are awakened into life. The promise of the year is blasted and shrivelled and burned up before them. Our most salutary and most beautiful institutions yield nothing but dust and smut; the harvest of our law is no more than stubble. It is in the nature of these eruptive diseases in the state to sink in by fits and reappear. But the fuel of the malady remains, and in my opinion is not in the smallest degree mitigated in its malignity, though it waits the favorable moment of a freer communication with the source of regicide to exert and to increase its force.

Is it that the people are changed, that the common wealth cannot be protected by its laws? I hardly think it. On the contrary, I conceive that these things happen because men are not changed, but remain always what they always were; they remain what the bulk of us ever must be, when abandoned to our vulgar propensities, without guide, leader, or control: that is, made to be full of a blind elevation in prosperity; to despise untried dangers; to be overpowered with unexpected reverses; to find no clew in a labyrinth of difficulties; to get out of a present inconvenience with any risk of future ruin; to follow and to bow to fortune; to admire successful, though wicked enterprise, and to imitate what we admire; to

contemn the government which announces danger from sacrilege and regicide whilst they are only in their infancy and their struggle, but which finds nothing that can alarm in their adult state, and in the power and triumph of those destructive principles. In a mass we cannot be left to ourselves. We must have leaders. If none will undertake to lead us right, we shall find guides who will contrive to conduct us to shame and ruin.

We are in a war of a *peculiar* nature. It is not with an ordinary community, which is hostile or friendly as passion or as interest may veer about, — not with a state which makes war through wantonness, and abandons it through lassitude. We are at war with a system which by its essence is inimical to all other governments, and which makes peace or war as peace and war may best contribute to their subversion. It is with an *armed doctrine* that we are at war. It has, by its essence, a faction of opinion and of interest and of enthusiasm in every country. To us it is a Colossus which bestrides our Channel. It has one foot on a foreign shore, the other upon the British soil. Thus advantaged, if it can at all exist, it must finally prevail. Nothing can so completely ruin any of the old governments, ours in particular, as the acknowledgment, directly or by implication, of any kind of superiority in this new power. This acknowledgment we make, if, in a bad or doubtful situation of our affairs, we solicit peace, or if we yield to the modes of new humiliation in which alone she is content to give us an hearing. By that means the terms cannot be of our choosing, — no, not in any part.

It is laid in the unalterable constitution of things, — None can aspire to act greatly but those who are

of force greatly to suffer. They who make their arrangements in the first run of misadventure, and in a temper of mind the common fruit of disappointment and dismay, put a seal on their calamities. To their power they take a security against any favors which they might hope from the usual inconstancy of fortune. I am therefore, my dear friend, invariably of your opinion, (though full of respect for those who think differently,) that neither the time chosen for it, nor the manner of soliciting a negotiation, were properly considered, — even though I had allowed (I hardly shall allow) that with the horde of Regicides we could by any selection of time or use of means obtain anything at all deserving the name of peace.

In one point we are lucky. The Regicide has received our advances with scorn. We have an enemy to whose virtues we can owe nothing, but on this occasion we are infinitely obliged to one of his vices. We owe more to his insolence than to our own precaution. The haughtiness by which the proud repel us has this of good in it, — that, in making us keep our distance, they must keep their distance too. In the present case, the pride of the Regicide may be our safety. He has given time for our reason to operate, and for British dignity to recover from its surprise. From first to last he has rejected all our advances. Far as we have gone, he has still left a way open to our retreat.

There is always an augury to be taken of what a peace is likely to be from the preliminary steps that are made to bring it about. We may gather something from the time in which the first overtures are made, from the quarter whence they come, from the manner in which they are received. These discover

the temper of the parties. If your enemy offers peace in the moment of success, it indicates that he is satisfied with something. It shows that there are limits to his ambition or his resentment. If he offers nothing under misfortune, it is probable that it is more painful to him to abandon the prospect of advantage than to endure calamity. If he rejects solicitation, and will not give even a nod to the suppliants for peace, until a change in the fortune of the war threatens him with ruin, then I think it evident that he wishes nothing more than to disarm his adversary to gain time. Afterwards a question arises, Which of the parties is likely to obtain the greater advantages by continuing disarmed and by the use of time?

With these few plain indications in our minds, it will not be improper to reconsider the conduct of the enemy together with our own, from the day that a question of peace has been in agitation. In considering this part of the question, I do not proceed on my own hypothesis. I suppose, for a moment, that this body of Regicide, calling itself a Republic, is a politic person, with whom something deserving the name of peace may be made. On that supposition, let us examine our own proceeding. Let us compute the profit it has brought, and the advantage that it is likely to bring hereafter. A peace too eagerly sought is not always the sooner obtained. The discovery of vehement wishes generally frustrates their attainment, and your adversary has gained a great advantage over you when he finds you impatient to conclude a treaty. There is in reserve not only something of dignity, but a great deal of prudence too. A sort of courage belongs to negotiation, as well as to operations of the field. A negotiator

must often seem willing to hazard the whole issue of his treaty, if he wishes to secure any one material point.

The Regicides were the first to declare war. We are the first to sue for peace. In proportion to the humility and perseverance we have shown in our addresses has been the obstinacy of their arrogance in rejecting our suit. The patience of their pride seems to have been worn out with the importunity of our courtship. Disgusted as they are with a conduct so different from all the sentiments by which they are themselves filled, they think to put an end to our vexatious solicitation by redoubling their insults.

It happens frequently that pride may reject a public advance, while interest listens to a secret suggestion of advantage. The opportunity has been afforded. At a very early period in the diplomacy of humiliation, a gentleman was sent on an errand,* of which, from the motive of it, whatever the event might be, we can never be ashamed. Humanity cannot be degraded by humiliation. It is its very character to submit to such things. There is a consanguinity between benevolence and humility. They are virtues of the same stock. Dignity is of as good a race; but it belongs to the family of fortitude. In the spirit of that benevolence, we sent a gentleman to beseech the Directory of Regicide not to be quite so prodigal as their republic had been of judicial murder. We solicited them to spare the lives of some unhappy persons of the first distinction, whose safety at other times could not have been an object of solicitation. They had quitted France on the

* Mr. Bird, sent to state the real situation of the Duc de Choiseul

faith of the declaration of the rights of citizens. They never had been in the service of the Regicides, nor at their hands had received any stipend. The very system and constitution of government that now prevails was settled subsequent to their emigration. They were under the protection of Great Britain, and in his Majesty's pay and service. Not an hostile invasion, but the disasters of the sea, had thrown them upon a shore more barbarous and inhospitable than the inclement ocean under the most pitiless of its storms. Here was an opportunity to express a feeling for the miseries of war, and to open some sort of conversation, which, (after our public overtures had glutted their pride,) at a cautious and jealous distance, might lead to something like an accommodation. — What was the event? A strange, uncouth thing, a theatrical figure of the opera, his head shaded with three-colored plumes, his body fantastically habited, strutted from the back scenes, and, after a short speech, in the mock-heroic falsetto of stupid tragedy, delivered the gentleman who came to make the representation into the custody of a guard, with directions not to lose sight of him for a moment, and then ordered him to be sent from Paris in two hours.

Here it is impossible that a sentiment of tenderness should not strike athwart the sternness of politics, and make us recall to painful memory the difference between this insolent and bloody theatre and the temperate, natural majesty of a civilized court, where the afflicted family of Asgill did not in vain solicit the mercy of the highest in rank and the most compassionate of the compassionate sex.

In this intercourse, at least, there was nothing to promise a great deal of success in our future advan-

ces. Whilst the fortune of the field was wholly with the Regicides, nothing was thought of but to follow where it led: and it led to everything. Not so much as a talk of treaty. Laws were laid down with arrogance. The most moderate politician in their clan* was chosen as the organ, not so much for prescribing limits to their claims as to mark what for the present they are content to leave to others. They made, not laws, not conventions, not late possession, but physical Nature and political convenience the sole foundation of their claims. The Rhine, the Mediterranean, and the ocean were the bounds which, for the time, they assigned to the Empire of Regicide. What was the Chamber of Union of Louis the Fourteenth, which astonished and provoked all Europe, compared to this declaration? In truth, with these limits, and their principle, they would not have left even the shadow of liberty or safety to any nation. This plan of empire was not taken up in the first intoxication of unexpected success. You must recollect that it was projected, just as the report has stated it, from the very first revolt of the faction against their monarchy; and it has been uniformly pursued, as a standing maxim of national policy, from that time to this. It is generally in the season of prosperity that men discover their real temper, principles, and designs. But this principle, suggested in their first struggles, fully avowed in their prosperity, has, in the most adverse state of their affairs, been tenaciously adhered to. The report, combined with their conduct, forms an infallible criterion of the views of this republic.

In their fortune there has been some fluctuation

* Boissy d'Anglas.

We are to see how their minds have been affected with a change. Some impression it made on them, undoubtedly. It produced some oblique notice of the submissions that were made by suppliant nations. The utmost they did was to make some of those cold, formal, general professions of a love of peace which no power has ever refused to make, because they mean little and cost nothing. The first paper I have seen (the publication at Hamburg) making a show of that pacific disposition discovered a rooted animosity against this nation, and an incurable rancor, even more than any one of their hostile acts. In this Hamburg declaration they choose to suppose that the war, on the part of England, *is a war of government, begun and carried on against the sense and interests of the people*, — thus sowing in their very overtures towards peace the seeds of tumult and sedition: for they never have abandoned, and never will they abandon, in peace, in war, in treaty, in any situation, or for one instant, their old, steady maxim of separating the people from their government. Let me add, (and it is with unfeigned anxiety for the character and credit of ministers that I do add,) if our government perseveres in its as uniform course of acting under instruments with such preambles, it pleads guilty to the charges made by our enemies against it, both on its own part and on the part of Parliament itself. The enemy must succeed in his plan for loosening and disconnecting all the internal holdings of the kingdom.

It was not enough that the speech from the throne, in the opening of the session in 1795, threw out oglings and glances of tenderness. Lest this coquetting should seem too cold and ambiguous, without

waiting for its effect, the violent passion for a relation to the Regicides produced a direct message from the crown, and its consequences from the two Houses of Parliament. On the part of the Regicides these declarations could not be entirely passed by without notice; but in that notice they discovered still more clearly the bottom of their character. The offer made to them by the message to Parliament was hinted at in their answer, — but in an obscure and oblique manner, as before. They accompanied their notice of the indications manifested on our side with every kind of insolent and taunting reflection. The Regicide Directory, on the day which, in their gypsy jargon, they call the 5th of *Pluviose*, in return for our advances, charge us with eluding our declarations under "evasive formalities and frivolous pretexts." What these pretexts and evasions were they do not say, and I have never heard. But they do not rest there. They proceed to charge us, and, as it should seem, our allies in the mass, with direct *perfidy;* they are so conciliatory in their language as to hint that this perfidious character is not new in our proceedings. However, notwithstanding this our habitual perfidy, they will offer peace "on conditions *as* moderate" — as what? as reason and as equity require? No, — as moderate "as are suitable to their *national dignity*." National dignity in all treaties I do admit is an important consideration: they have given us an useful hint on that subject: but dignity hitherto has belonged to the mode of proceeding, not to the matter of a treaty. Never before has it been mentioned as the standard for rating the conditions of peace, — no, never by the most violent of conquerors. Indemnification is capable of some estimate;

dignity has no standard. It is impossible to guess what acquisitions pride and ambition may think fit for their *dignity*. But lest any doubt should remain on what they think for their dignity, the Regicides in the next paragraph tell us "that they will have no peace with their enemies, until they have reduced them to a state which will put them under an *impossibility* of pursuing their wretched projects," — that is, in plain French or English, until they have accomplished our utter and irretrievable ruin. This is their *pacific* language. It flows from their unalterable principle, in whatever language they speak or whatever steps they take, whether of real war or of pretended pacification. They have never, to do them justice, been at much trouble in concealing their intentions. We were as obstinately resolved to think them not in earnest: but I confess, jests of this sort, whatever their urbanity may be, are not much to my taste.

To this conciliatory and amicable public communication our sole answer, in effect, is this: — "Citizen Regicides! whenever *you* find yourselves in the humor, you may have a peace with *us*. That is a point you may always command. We are constantly in attendance, and nothing you can do shall hinder us from the renewal of our supplications. You may turn us out at the door, but we will jump in at the window."

To those who do not love to contemplate the fall of human greatness, I do not know a more mortifying spectacle than to see the assembled majesty of the crowned heads of Europe waiting as patient suitors in the antechamber of Regicide. They wait, it seems, until the sanguinary tyrant Carnot shall have

snorted away the fumes of the indigested blood of his sovereign. Then, when, sunk on the down of usurped pomp, he shall have sufficiently indulged his meditations with what monarch he shall next glut his ravening maw, he may condescend to signify that it is his pleasure to be awake, and that he is at leisure to receive the proposals of his high and mighty clients for the terms on which he may respite the execution of the sentence he has passed upon them. At the opening of those doors, what a sight it must be to behold the plenipotentiaries of royal impotence, in the precedency which they will intrigue to obtain, and which will be granted to them according to the seniority of their degradation, sneaking into the Regicide presence, and, with the relics of the smile which they had dressed up for the levee of their masters still flickering on their curled lips, presenting the faded remains of their courtly graces, to meet the scornful, ferocious, sardonic grin of a bloody ruffian, who, whilst he is receiving their homage, is measuring them with his eye, and fitting to their size the slider of his guillotine! These ambassadors may easily return as good courtiers as they went; but can they ever return from that degrading residence loyal and faithful subjects, or with any true affection to their master, or true attachment to the constitution, religion, or laws of their country? There is great danger that they, who enter smiling into this Trophonian cave, will come out of it sad and serious conspirators, and such will continue as long as they live. They will become true conductors of contagion to every country which has had the misfortune to send them to the source of that electricity. At best, they will be-

come totally indifferent to good and evil, to one institution or another. This species of indifference is but too generally distinguishable in those who have been much employed in foreign courts, but in the present case the evil must be aggravated without measure: for they go from their country, not with the pride of the old character, but in a state of the lowest degradation; and what must happen in their place of residence can have no effect in raising them to the level of true dignity or of chaste self-estimation, either as men or as representatives of crowned heads.

Our early proceeding, which has produced these returns of affront, appeared to me totally new, without being adapted to the new circumstances of affairs. I have called to my mind the speeches and messages in former times. I find nothing like these. You will look in the journals to find whether my memory fails me. Before this time, never was a ground of peace laid, (as it were, in a Parliamentary record,) until it had been as good as concluded. This was a wise homage paid to the discretion of the crown. It was known how much a negotiation must suffer by having anything in the train towards it prematurely disclosed. But when those Parliamentary declarations were made, not so much as a step had been taken towards a negotiation in any mode whatever. The measure was an unpleasant and unseasonable discovery.

I conceive that another circumstance in that transaction has been as little authorized by any example, and that it is as little prudent in itself: I mean the formal recognition of the French Republic. Without entering, for the present, into a question on the

good faith manifested in that measure, or on its general policy, I doubt, upon mere temporary considerations of prudence, whether it was perfectly advisable. It is not within the rules of dexterous conduct to make an acknowledgment of a contested title in your enemy before you are morally certain that your recognition will secure his friendship. Otherwise it is a measure worse than thrown away. It adds infinitely to the strength, and consequently to the demands, of the adverse party. He has gained a fundamental point without an equivalent. It has happened as might have been foreseen. No notice whatever was taken of this recognition. In fact, the Directory never gave themselves any concern about it; and they received our acknowledgment with perfect scorn. With them it is not for the states of Europe to judge of their title: the very reverse. In their eye the title of every other power depends wholly on their pleasure.

Preliminary declarations of this sort, thrown out at random, and sown, as it were, broadcast, were never to be found in the mode of our proceeding with France and Spain, whilst the great monarchies of France and Spain existed. I do not say that a diplomatic measure ought to be, like a parliamentary or a judicial proceeding, according to strict precedent: I hope I am far from that pedantry. But this I know: that a great state ought to have some regard to its ancient maxims, especially where they indicate its dignity, where they concur with the rules of prudence, and, above all, where the circumstances of the time require that a spirit of innovation should be resisted which leads to the humiliation of sovereign powers. It would be ridiculous to assert that

those powers have suffered nothing in their estimation. I admit that the greater interests of state will for a moment supersede all other considerations; but if there was a rule, that a sovereign never should let down his dignity without a sure payment to his interest, the dignity of kings would be held high enough. At present, however, fashion governs in more serious things than furniture and dress. It looks as if sovereigns abroad were emulous in bidding against their estimation. It seems as if the preëminence of regicide was acknowledged, — and that kings tacitly ranked themselves below their sacrilegious murderers, as natural magistrates and judges over them. It appears as if dignity were the prerogative of crime, and a temporizing humiliation the proper part for venerable authority. If the vilest of mankind are resolved to be the most wicked, they lose all the baseness of their origin, and take their place above kings. This example in foreign princes I trust will not spread. It is the concern of mankind, that the destruction of order should not be a claim to rank, that crimes should not be the only title to preëminence and honor.

At this second stage of humiliation, (I mean the insulting declaration in consequence of the message to both Houses of Parliament,) it might not have been amiss to pause, and not to squander away the fund of our submissions, until we knew what final purposes of public interest they might answer. The policy of subjecting ourselves to further insults is not to me quite apparent. It was resolved, however, to hazard a third trial. Citizen Barthélemy had been established, on the part of the new republic, at Basle, — where, with his proconsulate of Switzerland and the

adjacent parts of Germany, he was appointed as a sort of factor to deal in the degradation of the crowned heads of Europe. At Basle it was thought proper, in order to keep others, I suppose, in countenance, that Great Britain should appear at this market, and bid with the rest for the mercy of the People-King.

On the 6th of March, 1796, Mr. Wickham, in consequence of authority, was desired to sound France on her disposition towards a general pacification, — to know whether she would consent to send ministers to a congress at such a place as might be hereafter agreed upon, — whether there would be a disposition to communicate the general grounds of a pacification, such as France (the diplomatic name of the Regicide power) would be willing to propose, as a foundation for a negotiation for peace with his Majesty *and his allies*, or to suggest any other way of arriving at the same end of a general pacification: but he had no authority to enter into any negotiation or discussion with Citizen Barthélemy upon these subjects.

On the part of Great Britain this measure was a voluntary act, wholly uncalled for on the part of Regicide. Suits of this sort are at least strong indications of a desire for accommodation. Any other body of men but the Directory would be somewhat soothed with such advances. They could not, however, begin their answer, which was given without much delay, and communicated on the 28th of the same month, without a preamble of insult and reproach. "They doubt the sincerity of the pacific intentions of this court." She did not begin, say they, yet to "know her real interests." "She did not seek peace *with good faith*." This, or something to this effect, has been the constant preliminary observation (now

grown into a sort of office form) on all our overtures to this power: a perpetual charge on the British government of fraud, evasion, and habitual perfidy.

It might be asked, From whence did these opinions of our insincerity and ill faith arise? It was because the British ministry (leaving to the Directory, however, to propose a better mode) proposed a *congress* for the purpose of a general pacification, and this they said "would render negotiation endless." From hence they immediately inferred a fraudulent intention in the offer. Unquestionably their mode of giving the law would bring matters to a more speedy conclusion. As to any other method more agreeable to them than a congress, an alternative expressly proposed to them, they did not condescend to signify their pleasure.

This refusal of treating conjointly with the powers allied against this republic furnishes matter for a great deal of serious reflection. They have hitherto constantly declined any other than a treaty with a single power. By thus dissociating every state from every other, like deer separated from the herd, each power is treated with on the merit of his being a deserter from the common cause. In that light, the Regicide power, finding each of them insulated and unprotected, with great facility gives the law to them all. By this system, for the present an incurable distrust is sown amongst confederates, and in future all alliance is rendered impracticable. It is thus they have treated with Prussia, with Spain, with Sardinia, with Bavaria, with the Ecclesiastical State, with Saxony; and here we see them refuse to treat with Great Britain in any other mode. They must be worse than blind who do not see with what undeviating regu-

larity of system, in this case and in all cases, they pursue their scheme for the utter destruction of every independent power, — especially the smaller, who cannot find any refuge whatever but in some common cause.

Renewing their taunts and reflections, they tell Mr. Wickham, "that *their* policy has no guides but openness and good faith, and that their conduct shall be conformable to these principles." They say concerning their government, that, "yielding to the ardent desire by which it is animated to procure peace for the French Republic and for all nations, it will not *fear to declare itself openly*. Charged by the Constitution with the execution of the *laws*, it cannot *make* or *listen* to any proposal that would be contrary to them. The constitutional act does not permit it to consent to any alienation of that which, according to the existing laws, constitutes the territory of the Republic."

"With respect to the countries *occupied by the French armies, and which have not been united to France*, they, as well as other interests, political and commercial, may become the subject of a negotiation, which will present to the Directory the means of proving how much it desires to attain speedily to a happy pacification." That "the Directory is ready to receive, in this respect, any overtures that shall be just, reasonable, and compatible *with the dignity of the Republic*."

On the head of what is *not* to be the subject of negotiation, the Directory is clear and open. As to what may be a matter of treaty, all this open dealing is gone. She retires into her shell. There she expects overtures from *you:* and you are to guess what she shall judge just, reasonable, and, above all, *compatible with her dignity*.

In the records of pride there does not exist so insulting a declaration. It is insolent in words, in manner; but in substance it is not only insulting, but alarming. It is a specimen of what may be expected from the masters we are preparing for our humbled country. Their openness and candor consist in a direct avowal of their despotism and ambition. We know that their declared resolution had been to surrender no object belonging to France previous to the war. They had resolved that the Republic was entire, and must remain so. As to what she has conquered from the Allies and united to the same indivisible body, it is of the same nature. That is, the Allies are to give up whatever conquests they have made or may make upon France; but all which she has violently ravished from her neighbors, and thought fit to appropriate, are not to become so much as objects of negotiation.

In this unity and indivisibility of possession are sunk ten immense and wealthy provinces, full of strong, flourishing, and opulent cities, (the Austrian Netherlands,) the part of Europe the most necessary to preserve any communication between this kingdom and its natural allies, next to Holland the most interesting to this country, and without which Holland must virtually belong to France. Savoy and Nice, the keys of Italy, and the citadel in her hands to bridle Switzerland, are in that consolidation. The important territory of Liege is torn out of the heart of the Empire. All these are integrant parts of the Republic, not to be subject to any discussion, or to be purchased by any equivalent. Why? Because there is a law which prevents it. What law? The law of nations? The acknowledged public law of Europe?

Treaties and conventions of parties? No, — not a pretence of the kind. It is a declaration not made in consequence of any prescription on her side, — not on any cession or dereliction, actual or tacit, of other powers. It is a declaration, *pendente lite*, in the middle of a war, one principal object of which was originally the defence, and has since been the recovery, of these very countries.

This strange law is not made for a trivial object, not for a single port or for a single fortress, but for a great kingdom, — for the religion, the morals, the laws, the liberties, the lives and fortunes of millions of human creatures, who, without their consent or that of their lawful government, are, by an arbitrary act of this regicide and homicide government which they call a law, incorporated into their tyranny.

In other words, their will is the law, not only at home, but as to the concerns of every nation. Who has made that law but the Regicide Republic itself, whose laws, like those of the Medes and Persians, they cannot alter or abrogate, or even so much as take into consideration? Without the least ceremony or compliment, they have sent out of the world whole sets of laws and lawgivers. They have swept away the very constitutions under which the legislatures acted and the laws were made. Even the fundamental sacred rights of man they have not scrupled to profane. They have set this holy code at nought with ignominy and scorn. Thus they treat all their domestic laws and constitutions, and even what they had considered as a law of Nature. But whatever they have put their seal on, for the purposes of their ambition, and the ruin of their neighbors, this alone is invulnerable, impassible, immortal. Assuming to

be masters of everything human and divine, here, and here alone, it seems, they are limited, "cooped and cabined in," and this omnipotent legislature finds itself wholly without the power of exercising its favorite attribute, the love of peace. In other words, they are powerful to usurp, impotent to restore; and equally by their power and their impotence they aggrandize themselves, and weaken and impoverish you and all other nations.

Nothing can be more proper or more manly than the state publication, called a *Note*, on this proceeding, dated Downing Street, the 10th of April, 1796. Only that it is better expressed, it perfectly agrees with the opinion I have taken the liberty of submitting to your consideration. I place it below at full length,* as my justification in thinking that this astonishing paper from the Directory is not only a direct negative to all treaty, but is a rejection of every principle upon which treaties could be made. To admit it for a moment were to erect this power, usurped at home, into a legislature to govern mankind. It is an authority that on a thousand occa-

* "This Court has seen, with regret, how far the tone and spirit of that answer, the nature and extent of the demands which it contains, and the manner of announcing them, are remote from any disposition for peace.

"The inadmissible pretension is there avowed of appropriating to France all that the laws actually existing there may have comprised under the denomination of French territory. To a demand such as this is added an express declaration that no proposal contrary to it will be made or even listened to: and this, under the pretence of an internal regulation, the provisions of which are wholly foreign to all other nations.

"While these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the king but to prosecute a war equally just and necessary.

"Whenever his enemies shall manifest more pacific sentiments,

sions they have asserted in claim, and, whenever they are able, exerted in practice. The dereliction of this whole scheme of policy became, therefore, an indispensable previous condition to all renewal of treaty. The remark of the British Cabinet on this arrogant and tyrannical claim is natural and unavoidable. Our ministry state, that, "*while these dispositions shall be persisted in, nothing is left for the king but to prosecute a war that is just and necessary.*"

It was of course that we should wait until the enemy showed some sort of disposition on his part to fulfil this condition. It was hoped, indeed, that our suppliant strains might be suffered to steal into the august ear in a more propitious season. That season, however, invoked by so many vows, conjurations, and prayers, did not come. Every declaration of hostility renovated, and every act pursued with double animosity, — the overrunning of Lombardy, — the subjugation of Piedmont, — the possession of its impregnable fortresses, — the seizing on all the neutral states of Italy, — our expulsion from Leghorn, — instances forever renewed for our expulsion from Genoa, — Spain rendered subject to them and hostile to us, — Portugal bent under the yoke, — half the

his Majesty will at all times be eager to concur in them, by lending himself, in concert with his allies, to all such measures as shall be best calculated to reëstablish general tranquillity on conditions just, honorable, and permanent: either by the establishment of a congress, which has been so often and so happily the means of restoring peace to Europe; or by a preliminary discussion of the principles which may be proposed, on either side, as a foundation of a general pacification; or, lastly, by an impartial examination of any other way which may be pointed out to him for arriving at the same salutary end.

"*Downing Street, April 10th,* 1796."

Empire overrun and ravaged, — were the only signs which this mild Republic thought proper to manifest of her pacific sentiments. Every demonstration of an implacable rancor and an untamable pride were the only encouragements we received to the renewal of our supplications.

Here, therefore, they and we were fixed. Nothing was left to the British ministry but "to prosecute a war just and necessary," — a war equally just as at the time of our engaging in it, — a war become ten times more necessary by everything which happened afterwards. This resolution was soon, however, forgot. It felt the heat of the season and melted away. New hopes were entertained from supplication. No expectations, indeed, were then formed from renewing a direct application to the French Regicides through the agent-general for the humiliation of sovereigns. At length a step was taken in degradation which even went lower than all the rest. Deficient in merits of our own, a mediator was to be sought, — and we looked for that mediator at Berlin! The King of Prussia's merits in abandoning the general cause might have obtained for him some sort of influence in favor of those whom he had deserted; but I have never heard that his Prussian Majesty had lately discovered so marked an affection for the Court of St. James's, or for the Court of Vienna, as to excite much hope of his interposing a very powerful mediation to deliver them from the distresses into which he had brought them.

If humiliation is the element in which we live, if it is become not only our occasional policy, but our habit, no great objection can be made to the modes in which it may be diversified, — though I confess I

cannot be charmed with the idea of our exposing our lazar sores at the door of every proud servitor of the French Republic, where the court dogs will not deign to lick them. We had, if I am not mistaken, a minister at that court, who might try its temper, and recede and advance as he found backwardness or encouragement. But to send a gentleman there on no other errand than this, and with no assurance whatever that he should not find, what he did find, a repulse, seems to me to go far beyond all the demands of a humiliation merely politic. I hope it did not arise from a predilection for that mode of conduct.

The cup of bitterness was not, however, drained to the dregs. Basle and Berlin were not sufficient. After so many and so diversified repulses, we were resolved to make another experiment, and to try another mediator. Among the unhappy gentlemen in whose persons royalty is insulted and degraded at the seat of plebeian pride and upstart insolence, there is a minister from Denmark at Paris. Without any previous encouragement to that, any more than the other steps, we sent through this turnpike to demand a passport for a person who on our part was to solicit peace in the metropolis, at the footstool of Regicide itself. It was not to be expected that any one of those degraded beings could have influence enough to settle any part of the terms in favor of the candidates for further degradation; besides, such intervention would be a direct breach in their system, which did not permit one sovereign power to utter a word in the concerns of his equal. — Another repulse. We were desired to apply directly in our persons. We submitted, and made the application.

It might be thought that here, at length, we had touched the bottom of humiliation; our lead was brought up covered with mud. But "in the lowest deep, a lower deep" was to open for us still more profound abysses of disgrace and shame. However, in we leaped. We came forward in our own name. The passport, such a passport and safe-conduct as would be granted to thieves who might come in to betray their accomplices, and no better, was granted to British supplication. To leave no doubt of its spirit, as soon as the rumor of this act of condescension could get abroad, it was formally announced with an explanation from authority, containing an invective against the ministry of Great Britain, their habitual frauds, their proverbial *Punic* perfidy. No such state-paper, as a preliminary to a negotiation for peace, has ever yet appeared. Very few declarations of war have ever shown so much and so unqualified animosity. I place it below,* as a dip-

* *Official Note, extracted from the Journal of the Defenders of the Country.*

"Executive Directory.

"Different journals have advanced that an English plenipotentiary had reached Paris, and had presented himself to the Executive Directory, but that, his propositions not having appeared satisfactory, he had received orders instantly to quit France.

"All these assertions are equally false.

"The notices given in the English papers of a minister having been sent to Paris, there to treat of peace, bring to recollection the overtures of Mr. Wickham to the ambassador of the Republic at Basle, and the rumors circulated relative to the mission of Mr. Hammond to the Court of Prussia. The *insignificance*, or rather the *subtle duplicity*, the PUNIC *style* of Mr. Wickham's note, is not forgotten. According to the partisans of the English ministry, it was to Paris that Mr. Hammond was to come to speak for peace. When his destination became public, and it was known that he went to Prussia,

lomatic curiosity, and in order to be the better understood in the few remarks I have to make upon a peace which, indeed, defies all description. "None but itself can be its parallel."

I pass by all the insolence and contumely of the performance, as it comes from them. The present

the same writer repeated that it was to accelerate a peace, and not withstanding the object, now well known, of this negotiation was to engage Prussia to break her treaties with the Republic, and to return into the coalition. The Court of Berlin, faithful to its engagements, repulsed these *perfidious* propositions. But in converting this intrigue into a mission for peace, the English ministry joined to the hope of giving a new enemy to France *that of justifying the continuance of the war in the eyes of the English nation, and of throwing all the odium of it on the French government.* Such was also the aim of Mr. Wickham's note. *Such is still that of the notices given at this time in the English papers.*

"This aim will appear evident, if we reflect how difficult it is that the ambitious government of England should sincerely wish for a peace that would *snatch from it its maritime preponderancy, would rëstablish the freedom of the seas, would give a new impulse to the Spanish, Dutch, and French marines,* and would carry to the highest degree of prosperity the industry and commerce of those nations in which it has always found *rivals,* and which it has considered as *enemies* of its commerce, when they were tired of being its *dupes.*

"*But there will no longer be any credit given to the pacific intentions of the English ministry, when it is known that its gold and its intrigues, its open practices and its insinuations, besiege more than ever the Cabinet of Vienna, and are one of the principal obstacles to the negotiation which that Cabinet would of itself be induced to enter on for peace.*

"They will no longer *be credited,* finally, when the moment of the rumor of these overtures being circulated is considered. *The English nation supports impatiently the continuance of the war; a reply must be made to its complaints, its reproaches:* the Parliament is about to reopen its sittings; the mouths of the orators who will declaim against the war must be shut, the demand of new taxes must be justified; and to obtain these results, it is necessary to be enabled to advance, that the French government refuses every reasonable proposition of peace"

question is not, how we are to be affected with it in regard to our dignity. That is gone. I shall say no more about it. Light lie the earth on the ashes of English pride! I shall only observe upon it *politically*, and as furnishing a direction for our own conduct in this low business.

The very idea of a negotiation for peace, whatever the inward sentiments of the parties may be, implies some confidence in their faith, some degree of belief in the professions which are made concerning it. A temporary and occasional credit, at least, is granted. Otherwise men stumble on the very threshold. I therefore wish to ask what hope we can have of their good faith, who, as the very basis of the negotiation, assume the ill faith and treachery of those they have to deal with? The terms, as against us, must be such as imply a full security against a treacherous conduct, — that is, such terms as this Directory stated in its first declaration, to place us "in an utter impossibility of executing our wretched projects." This is the omen, and the sole omen, under which we have consented to open our treaty.

The second observation I have to make upon it (much connected, undoubtedly, with the first) is, that they have informed you of the result they propose from the kind of peace they mean to grant you, — that is to say, the union they propose among nations with the view of rivalling our trade and destroying our naval power; and this they suppose (and with good reason, too) must be the inevitable effect of their peace. It forms one of their principal grounds for suspecting our ministers could not be in good earnest in their proposition. They make no scruple beforehand to tell you the whole of what

they intend; and this is what we call, in the modern style, the acceptance of a proposition for peace! In old language it would be called a most haughty, offensive, and insolent rejection of all treaty.

Thirdly, they tell you what they conceive to be the perfidious policy which dictates your delusive offer: that is, the design of cheating not only them, but the people of England, against whose interest and inclination this war is supposed to be carried on.

If we proceed in this business, under this preliminary declaration, it seems to me that we admit, (now for the third time,) by something a great deal stronger than words, the truth of the charges of every kind which they make upon the British ministry, and the grounds of those foul imputations. The language used by us, which in other circumstances would not be exceptionable, in this case tends very strongly to confirm and realize the suspicion of our enemy: I mean the declaration, that, if we do not obtain such terms of peace as suits our opinion of what our interests require, *then*, and in *that* case, we shall continue the war with vigor. This offer, so reasoned, plainly implies, that, without it, our leaders themselves entertain great doubts of the opinion and good affections of the British people; otherwise there does not appear any cause why we should proceed, under the scandalous construction of our enemy, upon the former offer made by Mr. Wickham, and on the new offer made directly at Paris. It is not, therefore, from a sense of dignity, but from the danger of radicating that false sentiment in the breasts of the enemy, that I think, under the auspices of this declaration, we cannot, with the least hope of a good event, or, indeed, with any

regard to the common safety, proceed in the train of this negotiation. I wish ministry would seriously consider the importance of their seeming to confirm the enemy in an opinion that his frequent use of appeals to the people against their government has not been without its effect. If it puts an end to this war, it will render another impracticable.

Whoever goes to the Directorial presence under this passport, with this offensive comment and foul explanation, goes, in the avowed sense of the court to which he is sent, as the instrument of a government dissociated from the interests and wishes of the nation, for the purpose of cheating both the people of France and the people of England. He goes out the declared emissary of a faithless ministry. He has perfidy for his credentials. He has national weakness for his full powers. I yet doubt whether any one can be found to invest himself with that character. If there should, it would be pleasant to read his instructions on the answer which he is to give to the Directory, in case they should repeat to him the substance of the manifesto which he carries with him in his portfolio.

So much for the *first* manifesto of the Regicide Court which went along with the passport. Lest this declaration should seem the effect of haste, or a mere sudden effusion of pride and insolence, on full deliberation, about a week after comes out a second. This manifesto is dated the 5th of October, one day before the speech from the throne, on the vigil of the festive day of cordial unanimity so happily celebrated by all parties in the British Parliament. In this piece the Regicides, our worthy friends, (I call them by advance and by courtesy what by law I shall be

obliged to call them hereafter,) our worthy friends, I say, renew and enforce the former declaration concerning our faith and sincerity, which they pinned to our passport. On three other points, which run through all their declarations, they are more explicit than ever.

First, they more directly undertake to be the real representatives of the people of this kingdom: and on a supposition, in which they agree with our Parliamentary reformers, that the House of Commons is not that representative, the function being vacant, they, as our true constitutional organ, inform his Majesty and the world of the sense of the nation. They tell us that "the English people see with regret his Majesty's government squandering away the funds which had been granted to him." This astonishing assumption of the public voice of England is but a slight foretaste of the usurpation which, on a peace, we may be assured they will make of all the powers in all the parts of our vassal Constitution. "If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

Next they tell us, as a condition to our treaty, that "this government must abjure the unjust hatred it bears to them, and at last open its ears to the voice of humanity." Truly, this is, even from them, an extraordinary demand. Hitherto, it seems, we have put wax into our ears, to shut them up against the tender, soothing strains, in the *affettuoso* of humanity, warbled from the throats of Reubell, Carnot, Tallien, and the whole chorus of confiscators, domiciliary visitors, committee-men of research, jurors and presidents of revolutionary tribunals, regicides, assassins, massacrers, and Septembrisers. It is not difficult

to discern what sort of humanity our government is to learn from these Siren singers. Our government also, I admit, with some reason, as a step towards the proposed fraternity, is required to abjure the unjust hatred which it bears to this body of honor and virtue. I thank God I am neither a minister nor a leader of opposition. I protest I cannot do what they desire. I could not do it, if I were under the guillotine, — or, as they ingeniously and pleasantly express it, "looking out of the little national window." Even at that opening I could receive none of their light. I am fortified against all such affections by the declaration of the government, which I must yet consider as lawful, made on the 29th of October, 1793,* and still ringing in my ears.

* "In their place has succeeded a system destructive of all public order, maintained by proscriptions, exiles, and confiscations without number, — by arbitrary imprisonments, — by massacres which cannot be remembered without horror, — and at length by the execrable murder of a just and beneficent sovereign, and of the illustrious princess, who with an unshaken firmness has shared all the misfortunes of her royal consort, his protracted sufferings, his cruel captivity, his ignominious death." — "They [the Allies] have had to encounter acts of aggression without pretext, open violations of all treaties, unprovoked declarations of war, — in a word, whatever corruption, intrigue, or violence could effect, for the purpose, so openly avowed, of subverting all the institutions of society, and of extending over all the nations of Europe that confusion which has produced the misery of France. This state of things cannot exist in France, without involving all the surrounding powers in one common danger, — without giving them the right, without imposing it upon them as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil which exists only by the successive violation of all law and all property, and which attacks the fundamental principles by which mankind is united in the bonds of civil society." — "The king would propose none other than equitable and moderate conditions: not such as the expenses, the risks, and the sacrifices of the war might justify, but such as his Majesty thinks

This Declaration was transmitted not only to all our commanders by sea and land, but to our ministers in every court of Europe. It is the most eloquent and highly finished in the style, the most judicious in the choice of topics, the most orderly in the arrangement, and the most rich in the coloring, without employing the smallest degree of exaggeration, of any state-paper that has ever yet appeared. An ancient writer (Plutarch, I think it is) quotes some verses on the eloquence of Pericles, who is called "the only orator that left stings in the minds of his hearers." Like his, the eloquence of the Declaration, not contradicting, but enforcing, senti-

himself under the indispensable necessity of requiring, with a view to these considerations, and still more to that of his own security and of the future tranquillity of Europe. His Majesty desires nothing more sincerely than thus to terminate a war which he in vain endeavored to avoid, and all the calamities of which, as now experienced by France, are to be attributed only to the ambition, the perfidy, and the violence of those whose crimes have involved their own country in misery and disgraced all civilized nations." — "The king promises on his part the suspension of hostilities, friendship, and (as far as the course of events will allow, of which the will of man cannot dispose) security and protection to all those who, by declaring for a monarchical government, shall shake off the yoke of a sanguinary anarchy: of that anarchy which has broken all the most sacred bonds of society, dissolved all the relations of civil life, violated every right, confounded every duty; which uses the name of liberty to exercise the most cruel tyranny, to annihilate all property, to seize on all possessions; which founds its power on the pretended consent of the people, and itself carries fire and sword through extensive provinces for having demanded their laws, their religion, and their *lawful sovereign*."

Declaration sent by his Majesty's command to the commanders of his Majesty's fleets and armies employed against France, and to his Majesty's ministers employed at foreign courts.

*Whitehall, Oct.* 29, 1793

ments of the truest humanity, has left stings that have penetrated more than skin-deep into my mind: and never can they be extracted by all the surgery of murder; never can the throbbings they have created be assuaged by all the emollient cataplasms of robbery and confiscation. I *cannot* love the Republic.

The third point, which they have more clearly expressed than ever, is of equal importance with the rest, and with them furnishes a complete view of the Regicide system. For they demand as a condition, without which our ambassador of obedience cannot be received with any hope of success, that he shall be "provided with full powers to negotiate a peace between the French Republic and Great Britain, and to conclude it *definitively* between the TWO powers." With their spear they draw a circle about us. They will hear nothing of a joint treaty. We must make a peace separately from our allies. We must, as the very first and preliminary step, be guilty of that perfidy towards our friends and associates with which they reproach us in our transactions with them, our enemies. We are called upon scandalously to betray the fundamental securities to ourselves and to all nations. In my opinion, (it is perhaps but a poor one,) if we are meanly bold enough to send an ambassador such as this official note of the enemy requires, we cannot even dispatch our emissary without danger of being charged with a breach of our alliance. Government now understands the full meaning of the passport.

Strange revolutions have happened in the ways of thinking and in the feelings of men; but it is a very extraordinary coalition of parties indeed, and a kind of unheard-of unanimity in public councils, which can

impose this new-discovered system of negotiation, as sound national policy, on the understanding of a spectator of this wonderful scene, who judges on the principles of anything he ever before saw, read, or heard of, and, above all, on the understanding of a person who has in his eye the transactions of the last seven years.

I know it is supposed, that, if good terms of capitulation are not granted, after we have thus so repeatedly hung out the white flag, the national spirit will revive with tenfold ardor. This is an experiment cautiously to be made. *Reculer pour mieux sauter*, according to the French byword, cannot be trusted to as a general rule of conduct. To diet a man into weakness and languor, afterwards to give him the greater strength, has more of the empiric than the rational physician. It is true that some persons have been kicked into courage, — and this is no bad hint to give to those who are too forward and liberal in bestowing insults and outrages on their passive companions; but such a course does not at first view appear a well-chosen discipline to form men to a nice sense of honor or a quick resentment of injuries. A long habit of humiliation does not seem a very good preparative to manly and vigorous sentiment. It may not leave, perhaps, enough of energy in the mind fairly to discern what are good terms or what are not. Men low and dispirited may regard those terms as not at all amiss which in another state of mind they would think intolerable: if they grow peevish in this state of mind, they may be roused, not against the enemy whom they have been taught to fear, but against the ministry,* who are more within their reach, and who

* "Ut lethargicus hic, cum fit pugil, et medicum urget." — Hor.

have refused conditions that are not unreasonable, from power that they have been taught to consider as irresistible.

If all that for some months I have heard have the least foundation, (I hope it has not,) the ministers are, perhaps, not quite so much to be blamed as their condition is to be lamented. I have been given to understand that these proceedings are not in their origin properly theirs. It is said that there is a secret in the House of Commons. It is said that ministers act, not according to the votes, but according to the dispositions, of the majority. I hear that the minority has long since spoken the general sense of the nation; and that to prevent those who compose it from having the open and avowed lead in that House, or perhaps in both Houses, it was necessary to preoccupy their ground, and to take their propositions out of their mouths, even with the hazard of being afterwards reproached with a compliance which it was foreseen would be fruitless.

If the general disposition of the people be, as I hear it is, for an immediate peace with Regicide, without so much as considering our public and solemn engagements to the party in France whose cause we had espoused, or the engagements expressed in our general alliances, not only without an inquiry into the terms, but with a certain knowledge that none but the worst terms will be offered, it is all over with us. It is strange, but it may be true, that, as the danger from Jacobinism is increased in my eyes and in yours, the fear of it is lessened in the eyes of many people who formerly regarded it with horror. It seems, they act under the impression of terrors of another sort, which have frightened them out of their

first apprehensions. But let their fears, or their hopes, or their desires, be what they will, they should recollect that they who would make peace without a previous knowledge of the terms make a surrender. They are conquered. They do not treat; they receive the law. Is this the disposition of the people of England? Then the people of England are contented to seek in the kindness of a foreign, systematic enemy, combined with a dangerous faction at home, a security which they cannot find in their own patriotism and their own courage. They are willing to trust to the sympathy of regicides the guaranty of the British monarchy. They are content to rest their religion on the piety of atheists by establishment. They are satisfied to seek in the clemency of practised murderers the security of their lives. They are pleased to confide their property to the safeguard of those who are robbers by inclination, interest, habit, and system. If this be our deliberate mind, truly we deserve to lose, what it is impossible we should long retain, the name of a nation.

In matters of state, a constitutional competence to act is in many cases the smallest part of the question. Without disputing (God forbid I should dispute!) the sole competence of the king and the Parliament, each in its province, to decide on war and peace, I venture to say no war *can* be long carried on against the will of the people. This war, in particular, cannot be carried on, unless they are enthusiastically in favor of it. Acquiescence will not do. There must be zeal. Universal zeal in such a cause, and at such a time as this is, cannot be looked for; neither is it necessary. Zeal in the larger part carries the force of the whole. Without this, no government, cer-

tainly not our government, is capable of a great war. None of the ancient, regular governments have wherewithal to fight abroad with a foreign foe, and at home to overcome repining, reluctance, and chicane. It must be some portentous thing, like Regicide France, that can exhibit such a prodigy. Yet even she, the mother of monsters, more prolific than the country of old called *ferax monstrorum*, shows symptoms of being almost effete already; and she will be so, unless the fallow of a peace comes to recruit her fertility. But whatever may be represented concerning the meanness of the popular spirit, I, for one, do not think so desperately of the British nation. Our minds, as I said, are light, but they are not depraved. We are dreadfully open to delusion and to dejection; but we are capable of being animated and undeceived.

It cannot be concealed: we are a divided people. But in divisions, where a part is to be taken, we are to make a muster of our strength. I have often endeavored to compute and to class those who, in any political view, are to be called the people. Without doing something of this sort, we must proceed ab surdly. We should not be much wiser, if we pretended to very great accuracy in our estimate; but I think, in the calculation I have made, the error cannot be very material. In England and Scotland, I compute that those of adult age, not declining in life, of tolerable leisure for such discussions, and of some means of information, more or less, and who are above menial dependence. (or what virtually is such,) may amount to about four hundred thousand. There is such a thing as a natural representative of the people. This body is that representative; and on this

body, more than on the legal constituent, the artificial representative depends. This is the British public; and it is a public very numerous. The rest, when feeble, are the objects of protection, — when strong, the means of force. They who affect to consider that part of us in any other light insult while they cajole us; they do not want us for counsellors in deliberation, but to list us as soldiers for battle.

Of these four hundred thousand political citizens, I look upon one fifth, or about eighty thousand, to be pure Jacobins, utterly incapable of amendment, objects of eternal vigilance, and, when they break out, of legal constraint. On these, no reason, no argument, no example, no venerable authority, can have the slightest influence. They desire a change; and they will have it, if they can. If they cannot have it by English cabal, they will make no sort of scruple of having it by the cabal of France, into which already they are virtually incorporated. It is only their assured and confident expectation of the advantages of French fraternity, and the approaching blessings of Regicide intercourse, that skins over their mischievous dispositions with a momentary quiet.

This minority is great and formidable. I do not know whether, if I aimed at the total overthrow of a kingdom, I should wish to be incumbered with a larger body of partisans. They are more easily disciplined and directed than if the number were greater. These, by their spirit of intrigue, and by their restless agitating activity, are of a force far superior to their numbers, and, if times grew the least critical, have the means of debauching or intimidating many of those who are now sound, as well as of adding to

their force large bodies of the more passive part of the nation. This minority is numerous enough to make a mighty cry for peace, or for war, or for any object they are led vehemently to desire. By passing from place to place with a velocity incredible, and diversifying their character and description, they are capable of mimicking the general voice. We must not always judge of the generality of the opinion by the noise of the acclamation.

The majority, the other four fifths, is perfectly sound, and of the best possible disposition to religion, to government, to the true and undivided interest of their country. Such men are naturally disposed to peace. They who are in possession of all they wish are languid and improvident. With this fault, (and I admit its existence in all its extent,) they would not endure to hear of a peace that led to the ruin of everything for which peace is dear to them. However, the desire of peace is essentially the weak side of that kind of men. All men that are ruined are ruined on the side of their natural propensities. There they are unguarded. Above all, good men do not suspect that their destruction is attempted through their virtues. This their enemies are perfectly aware of; and accordingly they, the most turbulent of mankind, who never made a scruple to shake the tranquillity of their country to its centre, raise a continual cry for peace with France. "Peace with Regicide, and war with the rest of the world," is their motto. From the beginning, and even whilst the French gave the blows, and we hardly opposed the *vis inertiæ* to their efforts, from that day to this hour, like importunate Guinea-fowls, crying one note day and night, they have called for peace.

In this they are, as I confess in all things they are, perfectly consistent. They who wish to unite themselves to your enemies naturally desire that you should disarm yourself by a peace with these enemies. But it passes my conception how they who wish well to their country on its ancient system of laws and manners come not to be doubly alarmed, when they find nothing but a clamor for peace in the mouths of the men on earth the least disposed to it in their natural or in their habitual character.

I have a good opinion of the general abilities of the Jacobins: not that I suppose them better born than others; but strong passions awaken the faculties; they suffer not a particle of the man to be lost. The spirit of enterprise gives to this description the full use of all their native energies. If I have reason to conceive that my enemy, who, as such, must have an interest in my destruction, is also a person of discernment and sagacity, then I must be quite sure, that, in a contest, the object he violently pursues is the very thing by which my ruin is likely to be the most perfectly accomplished. Why do the Jacobins cry for peace? Because they know, that, this point gained, the rest will follow of course. On our part, why are all the rules of prudence, as sure as the laws of material Nature, to be at this time reversed? How comes it, that now, for the first time, men think it right to be governed by the counsels of their enemies? Ought they not rather to tremble, when they are persuaded to travel on the same road and to tend to the same place of rest?

The minority I speak of is not susceptible of an impression from the topics of argument to be used to the larger part of the community. I therefore do not

address to them any part of what I have to say. The more forcibly I drive my arguments against their system, so as to make an impression where I wish to make it, the more strongly I rivet them in their sentiments. As for us, who compose the far larger, and what I call the far better part of the people, let me say, that we have not been quite fairly dealt with, when called to this deliberation. The Jacobin minority have been abundantly supplied with stores and provisions of all kinds towards their warfare. No sort of argumentative materials, suited to their purposes, have been withheld. False they are, unsound, sophistical; but they are regular in their direction. They all bear one way, and they all go to the support of the substantial merits of their cause. The others have not had the question so much as fairly stated to them.

There has not been in this century any foreign peace or war, in its origin the fruit of popular desire, except the war that was made with Spain in 1739. Sir Robert Walpole was forced into the war by the people, who were inflamed to this measure by the most leading politicians, by the first orators, and the greatest poets of the time. For that war Pope sang his dying notes. For that war Johnson, in more energetic strains, employed the voice of his early genius. For that war Glover distinguished himself in the way in which his muse was the most natural and happy. The crowd readily followed the politicians in the cry for a war which threatened little bloodshed, and which promised victories that were attended with something more solid than glory. A war with Spain was a war of plunder. In the present conflict with Regicide, Mr. Pitt has not hitherto

had, nor will perhaps for a few days have, many prizes to hold out in the lottery of war, to tempt the lower part of our character. He can only maintain it by an appeal to the higher; and to those in whom that higher part is the most predominant he must look the most for his support. Whilst he holds out no inducements to the wise nor bribes to the avaricious, he may be forced by a vulgar cry into a peace ten times more ruinous than the most disastrous war. The weaker he is in the fund of motives which apply to our avarice, to our laziness, and to our lassitude, if he means to carry the war to any end at all, the stronger he ought to be in his addresses to our magnanimity and to our reason.

In stating that Walpole was driven by a popular clamor into a measure not to be justified, I do not mean wholly to excuse his conduct. My time of observation did not exactly coincide with that event; but I read much of the controversies then carried on. Several years after the contests of parties had ceased, the people were amused, and in a degree warmed with them. The events of that era seemed then of magnitude, which the revolutions of our time have reduced to parochial importance; and the debates which then shook the nation now appear of no higher moment than a discussion in a vestry. When I was very young, a general fashion told me I was to admire some of the writings against that minister; a little more maturity taught me as much to despise them. I observed one fault in his general proceeding. He never manfully put forward the entire strength of his cause. He temporized, he managed, and, adopting very nearly the sentiments of his adversaries, he opposed their inferences. This, for a

political commander, is the choice of a weak post. His adversaries had the better of the argument as he handled it, not as the reason and justice of his cause enabled him to manage it. I say this, after having seen, and with some care examined, the original documents concerning certain important transactions of those times. They perfectly satisfied me of the extreme injustice of that war, and of the falsehood of the colors which, to his own ruin, and guided by a mistaken policy, he suffered to be daubed over that measure. Some years after, it was my fortune to converse with many of the principal actors against that minister, and with those who principally excited that clamor. None of them, no, not one, did in the least defend the measure, or attempt to justify their conduct. They condemned it as freely as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in history in which they were totally unconcerned. Thus it will be. They who stir up the people to improper desires, whether of peace or war, will be condemned by themselves. They who weakly yield to them will be condemned by history.

In my opinion, the present ministry are as far from doing full justice to their cause in this war as Walpole was from doing justice to the peace which at that time he was willing to preserve. They throw the light on one side only of their case; though it is impossible they should not observe that the other side, which is kept in the shade, has its importance too. They must know that France is formidable, not only as she is France, but as she is Jacobin France. They knew from the beginning that the Jacobin party was not confined to that country. They knew, they felt, the strong disposition of the

same faction in both countries to communicate and to coöperate. For some time past, these two points have been kept, and even industriously kept, out of sight. France is considered as merely a foreign power, and the seditious English only as a domestic faction. The merits of the war with the former have been argued solely on political grounds. To prevent the mischievous doctrines of the latter from corrupting our minds, matter and argument have been supplied abundantly, and even to surfeit, on the excellency of our own government. But nothing has been done to make us feel in what manner the safety of that government is connected with the principle and with the issue of this war. For anything which in the late discussion has appeared, the war is entirely collateral to the state of Jacobinism, — as truly a foreign war to us and to all our home concerns as the war with Spain in 1739, about *Guarda-costas*, the Madrid Convention, and the fable of Captain Jenkins's ears.

Whenever the adverse party has raised a cry for peace with the Regicide, the answer has been little more than this: "That the administration wished for such a peace full as much as the opposition, but that the time was not convenient for making it." Whatever else has been said was much in the same spirit. Reasons of this kind never touched the substantial merits of the war. They were in the nature of dilatory pleas, exceptions of form, previous questions. Accordingly, all the arguments against a compliance with what was represented as the popular desire (urged on with all possible vehemence and earnestness by the Jacobins) have appeared flat and languid, feeble and evasive. They appeared to aim

only at gaining time. They never entered into the peculiar and distinctive character of the war. They spoke neither to the understanding nor to the heart. Cold as ice themselves, they never could kindle in our breasts a spark of that zeal which is necessary to a conflict with an adverse zeal; much less were they made to infuse into our minds that stubborn, persevering spirit which alone is capable of bearing up against those vicissitudes of fortune which will probably occur, and those burdens which must be inevitably borne, in a long war. I speak it emphatically, and with a desire that it should be marked,—in a *long* war; because, without such a war, no experience has yet told us that a dangerous power has ever been reduced to measure or to reason. I do not throw back my view to the Peloponnesian War of twenty-seven years; nor to two of the Punic Wars, the first of twenty-four, the second of eighteen; nor to the more recent war concluded by the Treaty of Westphalia, which continued, I think, for thirty. I go to what is but just fallen behind living memory, and immediately touches our own country. Let the portion of our history from the year 1689 to 1713 be brought before us. We shall find that in all that period of twenty-four years there were hardly five that could be called a season of peace; and the interval between the two wars was in reality nothing more than a very active preparation for renovated hostility. During that period, every one of the propositions of peace came from the enemy: the first, when they were accepted, at the Peace of Ryswick; the second, where they were rejected, at the Congress at Gertruydenberg; the last, when the war ended by the Treaty of Utrecht. Even then, a very great part of

the nation, and that which contained by far the most intelligent statesmen, was against the conclusion of the war. I do not enter into the merits of that question as between the parties. I only state the existence of that opinion as a fact, from whence you may draw such an inference as you think properly arises from it.

It is for us at present to recollect what we have been, and to consider what, if we please, we may be still. At the period of those wars our principal strength was found in the resolution of the people, and that in the resolution of a part only of the then whole, which bore no proportion to our existing magnitude. England and Scotland were not united at the beginning of that mighty struggle. When, in the course of the contest, they were conjoined, it was in a raw, an ill-cemented, an unproductive, union. For the whole duration of the war, and long after, the names and other outward and visible signs of approximation rather augmented than diminished our insular feuds. They were rather the causes of new discontents and new troubles than promoters of cordiality and affection. The now single and potent Great Britain was then not only two countries, but, from the party heats in both, and the divisions formed in each of them, each of the old kingdoms within itself, in effect, was made up of two hostile nations. Ireland, now so large a source of the common opulence and power, and which, wisely managed, might be made much more beneficial and much more effective, was then the heaviest of the burdens. An army, not much less than forty thousand men, was drawn from the general effort, to keep that kingdom in a poor, unfruitful, and resourceless subjection.

Such was the state of the empire. The state of our finances was worse, if possible. Every branch of the revenue became less productive after the Revolution. Silver, not as now a sort of counter, but the body of the current coin, was reduced so low as not to have above three parts in four of the value in the shilling. In the greater part the value hardly amounted to a fourth. It required a dead expense of three millions sterling to renew the coinage. Public credit, that great, but ambiguous principle, which has so often been predicted as the cause of our certain ruin, but which for a century has been the constant companion, and often the means, of our prosperity and greatness, had its origin, and was cradled, I may say, in bankruptcy and beggary. At this day we have seen parties contending to be admitted, at a moderate premium, to advance eighteen millions to the exchequer. For infinitely smaller loans, the Chancellor of the Exchequer of that day, Montagu, the father of public credit, counter-securing the state by the appearance of the city with the Lord Mayor of London at his side, was obliged, like a solicitor for an hospital, to go cap in hand from shop to shop, to borrow an hundred pound, and even smaller sums. When made up in driblets as they could, their best securities were at an interest of twelve per cent. Even the paper of the Bank (now at par with cash, and generally preferred to it) was often at a discount of twenty per cent. By this the state of the rest may be judged.

As to our commerce, the imports and exports of the nation, now six-and-forty million, did not then amount to ten. The inland trade, which is commonly passed by in this sort of estimates, but which,

in part growing out of the foreign, and connected with it, is more advantageous and more substantially nutritive to the state, is not only grown in a proportion of near five to one as the foreign, but has been augmented at least in a tenfold proportion. When I came to England, I remember but one river navigation, the rate of carriage on which was limited by an act of Parliament. It was made in the reign of William the Third. I mean that of the Aire and Calder. The rate was settled at thirteen pence. So high a price demonstrated the feebleness of these beginnings of our inland intercourse. In my time, one of the longest and sharpest contests I remember in your House, and which rather resembled a violent contention amongst national parties than a local dispute, was, as well as I can recollect, to hold the price up to threepence. Even this, which a very scanty justice to the proprietors required, was done with infinite difficulty. As to private credit, there were not, as I believe, twelve bankers' shops at that time out of London. In this their number, when I first saw the country, I cannot be quite exact; but certainly those machines of domestic credit were then very few. They are now in almost every market-town: and this circumstance (whether the thing be carried to an excess or not) demonstrates the astonishing increase of private confidence, of general circulation, and of internal commerce, — an increase out of all proportion to the growth of the foreign trade. Our naval strength in the time of King William's war was nearly matched by that of France; and though conjoined with Holland, then a maritime power hardly inferior to our own, even with that force we were not always victorious. Though finally

superior, the allied fleets experienced many unpleasant reverses on their own element. In two years three thousand vessels were taken from the English trade. On the Continent we lost almost every battle we fought.

In 1697, (it is not quite an hundred years ago,) in that state of things, amidst the general debasement of the coin, the fall of the ordinary revenue, the failure of all the extraordinary supplies, the ruin of commerce, and the almost total extinction of an infant credit, the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, whom we have just seen begging from door to door, came forward to move a resolution full of vigor, in which, far from being discouraged by the generally adverse fortune and the long continuance of the war, the Commons agreed to address the crown in the following manly, spirited, and truly animating style: —

"This is the EIGHTH year in which your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons in Parliament assembled, have assisted your Majesty with large supplies for carrying on a just and necessary war, in defence of our religion, preservation of our laws, and vindication of the rights and liberties of the people of England."

Afterwards they proceed in this manner: —

"And to show to your Majesty and all Christendom that the Commons of England will not be *amused* or diverted from their firm resolutions of obtaining by WAR a safe and honorable peace, we do, in the name of all those we represent, renew our assurances to your Majesty that this House will support your Majesty and your government against all your enemies, both at home and abroad, and that

they will effectually assist you in the prosecution and carrying on the present war against France."

The amusement and diversion they speak of was the suggestion of a treaty *proposed by the enemy*, and announced from the throne. Thus the people of England felt in the *eighth*, not in the *fourth* year of the war. No sighing or panting after negotiation; no motions from the opposition to force the ministry nto a peace; no messages from ministers to palsy and deaden the resolution of Parliament or the spirit of the nation. They did not so much as advise the king to listen to the propositions of the enemy, nor to seek for peace, but through the mediation of a vigorous war. This address was moved in an hot, a divided, a factious, and, in a great part, disaffected House of Commons; and it was carried, *nemine contradicente*.

While that first war (which was ill smothered by the Treaty of Ryswick) slept in the thin ashes of a seeming peace, a new conflagration was in its immediate causes. A fresh and a far greater war was in preparation. A year had hardly elapsed, when arrangements were made for renewing the contest with tenfold fury. The steps which were taken, at that time, to compose, to reconcile, to unite, and to discipline all Europe against the growth of France, certainly furnish to a statesman the finest and most interesting part in the history of that great period. It formed the masterpiece of King William's policy, dexterity, and perseverance. Full of the idea of preserving not only a local civil liberty united with order to our country, but to embody it in the political liberty, the order, and the independence of nations united under a natural head, the king called

upon his Parliament to put itself into a posture "*to preserve to England the weight and influence it at present had on the councils and affairs* ABROAD. It will be requisite *Europe* should see you will not be wanting to yourselves."

Baffled as that monarch was, and almost heart-broken at the disappointment he met with in the mode he first proposed for that great end, he held on his course. He was faithful to his object; and in councils, as in arms, over and over again repulsed, over and over again he returned to the charge. All the mortifications he had suffered from the last Parliament, and the greater he had to apprehend from that newly chosen, were not capable of relaxing the vigor of his mind. He was in Holland when he combined the vast plan of his foreign negotiations. When he came to open his design to his ministers in England, even the sober firmness of Somers, the undaunted resolution of Shrewsbury, and the adventurous spirit of Montagu and Orford were staggered. They were not yet mounted to the elevation of the king. The cabinet, then the regency, met on the subject at Tunbridge Wells, the 28th of August, 1698; and there, Lord Somers holding the pen, after expressing doubts on the state of the Continent, which they ultimately refer to the king, as best informed, they give him a most discouraging portrait of the spirit of this nation. "So far as relates to England," say these ministers, "it would be want of duty not to give your Majesty this clear account: that there is *a deadness and want of spirit in the nation universally*, so as not at all to be disposed to *the thought of entering into a new war;* and that they seem to be *tired out with taxes* to a degree beyond what was discerned, till it appeared upon

the occasion of *the late elections*. This is the truth of the fact, upon which your Majesty will determine what resolutions are proper to be taken."

His Majesty did determine, — and did take and pursue his resolution. In all the tottering imbecility of a new government, and with Parliament totally unmanageable, he persevered. He persevered to expel the fears of his people by his fortitude, to steady their fickleness by his constancy, to expand their narrow prudence by his enlarged wisdom, to sink their factious temper in his public spirit. In spite of his people, he resolved to make them great and glorious, — to make England, inclined to shrink into her narrow self, the arbitress of Europe, the tutelary angel of the human race. In spite of the ministers, who staggered under the weight that his mind imposed upon theirs, unsupported as they felt themselves by the popular spirit, he infused into them his own soul, he renewed in them their ancient heart, he rallied them in the same cause.

It required some time to accomplish this work. The people were first gained, and, through them, their distracted representatives. Under the influence of King William, Holland had rejected the allurements of every seduction, and had resisted the terrors of every menace. With Hannibal at her gates, she had nobly and magnanimously refused all separate treaty, or anything which might for a moment appear to divide her affection or her interest or even to distinguish her in identity from England. Having settled the great point of the consolidation (which he hoped would be eternal) of the countries made for a common interest and common sentiment, the king, in his message to both Houses, calls their

attention to the affairs of the *States General.* The House of Lords was perfectly sound, and entirely impressed with the wisdom and dignity of the king's proceedings. In answer to the message, which you will observe was narrowed to a single point, (the danger of the States General,) after the usual professions of zeal for his service, the Lords opened themselves at large. They go far beyond the demands of the message. They express themselves as follows.

"We take this occasion *further* to assure your Majesty we are very sensible of *the great and imminent danger to which the States General are at present exposed; and we do perfectly agree with them in believing that their safety and ours are so inseparably united that whatsoever is ruin to the one must be fatal to the other.*

"And we humbly desire your Majesty will be pleased *not only* to make good all the articles of any *former* treaty to the States General, but that you will enter into a strict league offensive and defensive with them *for our common preservation; and that you will invite into it all princes and states who are concerned in the present visible danger arising from the union of France and Spain.*

"And we further desire your Majesty, that you will be pleased to enter into such alliances with the *Emperor* as your Majesty shall think fit, pursuant to the ends of the treaty of 1689: towards all which we assure your Majesty of our hearty and sincere assistance; not doubting, but, whenever your Majesty shall be obliged to engage for the defence of your allies, *and for securing the liberty and quiet of Europe,* Almighty God will protect your sacred person in so righteous a cause, and that the unanimity, wealth, and courage of your subjects will carry your

Majesty with honor and success *through all the difficulties of a* JUST WAR."

The House of Commons was more reserved. The late popular disposition was still in a great degree prevalent in the representative, after it had been made to change in the constituent body. The principle of the Grand Alliance was not directly recognized in the resolution of the Commons, nor the war announced, though they were well aware the alliance was formed for the war. However, compelled by the returning sense of the people, they went so far as to fix the three great immovable pillars of the safety and greatness of England, as they were then, as they are now, and as they must ever be to the end of time. They asserted in general terms the necessity of supporting Holland, of keeping united with our allies, and maintaining the liberty of Europe; though they restricted their vote to the succors stipulated by actual treaty. But now they were fairly embarked, they were obliged to go with the course of the vessel; and the whole nation, split before into an hundred adverse factions, with a king at its head evidently declining to his tomb, the whole nation, lords, commons, and people, proceeded as one body informed by one soul. Under the British union, the union of Europe was consolidated; and it long held together with a degree of cohesion, firmness, and fidelity not known before or since in any political combination of that extent.

Just as the last hand was given to this immense and complicated machine, the master workman died. But the work was formed on true mechanical principles, and it was as truly wrought. It went by the impulse it had received from the first mover. The man was dead; but the Grand Alliance survived, in

which King William lived and reigned. That heartless and dispirited people, whom Lord Somers had represented about two years before as dead in energy and operation, continued that war, to which it was supposed they were unequal in mind and in means, for near thirteen years.

For what have I entered into all this detail? To what purpose have I recalled your view to the end of the last century? It has been done to show that the British nation was then a great people, — to point out how and by what means they came to be exalted above the vulgar level, and to take that lead which they assumed among mankind. To qualify us for that preëminence, we had then an high mind and a constancy unconquerable; we were then inspired with no flashy passions, but such as were durable as well as warm, such as corresponded to the great interests we had at stake. This force of character was inspired, as all such spirit must ever be, from above. Government gave the impulse. As well may we fancy that of itself the sea will swell, and that without winds the billows will insult the adverse shore, as that the gross mass of the people will be moved, and elevated, and continue by a steady and permanent direction to bear upon one point, without the influence of superior authority or superior mind.

This impulse ought, in my opinion, to have been given in this war; and it ought to have been continued to it at every instant. It is made, if ever war was made, to touch all the great springs of action in the human breast. It ought not to have been a war of apology. The minister had, in this conflict, wherewithal to glory in success, to be consoled in adversity,

to hold high his principle in all fortunes. If it were not given him to support the falling edifice, he ought to bury himself under the ruins of the civilized world. All the art of Greece and all the pride and power of Eastern monarchs never heaped upon their ashes so grand a monument.

There were days when his great mind was up to the crisis of the world he is called to act in.* His manly eloquence was equal to the elevated wisdom of such sentiments. But the little have triumphed over the great: an unnatural, (as it should seem,) not an unusual victory. I am sure you cannot forget with how much uneasiness we heard, in conversation, the language of more than one gentleman at the opening of this contest, — "that he was willing to try the war for a year or two, and, if it did not succeed, then to vote for peace." As if war was a matter of experiment! As if you could take it up or lay it down as an idle frolic! As if the dire goddess that presides over it, with her murderous spear in her hand and her Gorgon at her breast, was a coquette to be flirted with! We ought with reverence to approach that tremendous divinity, that loves courage, but commands counsel. War never leaves where it found a nation. It is never to be entered into without a mature deliberation, — not a deliberation lengthened out into a perplexing indecision, but a deliberation leading to a sure and fixed judgment. When so taken up, it is not to be abandoned without reason as valid, as fully and as extensively considered. Peace may be made as unadvisedly as war. Nothing is so rash as fear; and the counsels of pusillanimity very rarely put off, whilst they are always

* See the Declaration.

sure to aggravate, the evils from which they would fly.

In that great war carried on against Louis the Fourteenth for near eighteen years, government spared no pains to satisfy the nation, that, though they were to be animated by a desire of glory, glory was not their ultimate object; but that everything dear to them, in religion, in law, in liberty, everything which as freemen, as Englishmen, and as citizens of the great commonwealth of Christendom, they had at heart, was then at stake. This was to know the true art of gaining the affections and confidence of an high-minded people; this was to understand human nature. A danger to avert a danger, a present inconvenience and suffering to prevent a foreseen future and a worse calamity, — these are the motives that belong to an animal who in his constitution is at once adventurous and provident, circumspect and daring, — whom his Creator has made, as the poet says, "of large discourse, looking before and after." But never can a vehement and sustained spirit of fortitude be kindled in a people by a war of calculation. It has nothing that can keep the mind erect under the gusts of adversity. Even where men are willing, as sometimes they are, to barter their blood for lucre, to hazard their safety for the gratification of their avarice, the passion which animates them to that sort of conflict, like all the shortsighted passions, must see its objects distinct and near at hand. The passions of the lower order are hungry and impatient. Speculative plunder, — contingent spoil, — future, long adjourned, uncertain booty, — pillage which must enrich a late posterity, and which possibly may not reach to posterity at all, — these, for

any length of time, will never support a mercenary war. The people are in the right. The calculation of profit in all such wars is false. On balancing the account of such wars, ten thousand hogsheads of sugar are purchased at ten thousand times their price. The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the blood of man. It is well shed for our family, for our friends, for our God, for our country, for our kind. The rest is vanity; the rest is crime.

In the war of the Grand Alliance most of these considerations voluntarily and naturally had their part. Some were pressed into the service. The political interest easily went in the track of the natural sentiment. In the reverse course the carriage does not follow freely. I am sure the natural feeling, as I have just said, is a far more predominant ingredient in this war than in that of any other that ever was waged by this kingdom.

If the war made to prevent the union of two crowns upon one head was a just war, this, which is made to prevent the tearing all crowns from all heads which ought to wear them, and with the crowns to smite off the sacred heads themselves, this is a just war.

If a war to prevent Louis the Fourteenth from imposing his religion was just, a war to prevent the murderers of Louis the Sixteenth from imposing their irreligion upon us is just: a war to prevent the operation of a system which makes life without dignity and death without hope is a just war.

If to preserve political independence and civil freedom to nations was a just ground of war, a war to preserve national independence, property, liberty, life, and honor from certain universal havoc is a war just,

necessary, manly, pious; and we are bound to persevere in it by every principle, divine and human, as long as the system which menaces them all, and all equally, has an existence in the world.

You, who have looked at this matter with as fair and impartial an eye as can be united with a feeling heart, you will not think it an hardy assertion, when I affirm that it were far better to be conquered by any other nation than to have this faction for a neighbor. Before I felt myself authorized to say this, I considered the state of all the countries in Europe for these last three hundred years, which have been obliged to submit to a foreign law. In most of those I found the condition of the annexed countries even better, certainly not worse, than the lot of those which were the patrimony of the conqueror. They wanted some blessings, but they were free from many very great evils. They were rich and tranquil. Such was Artois, Flanders, Lorraine, Alsatia, under the old government of France. Such was Silesia under the King of Prussia. They who are to live in the vicinity of this new fabric are to prepare to live in perpetual conspiracies and seditions, and to end at last in being conquered, if not to her dominion, to her resemblance. But when we talk of conquest by other nations, it is only to put a case. This is the only power in Europe by which it is *possible* we should be conquered. To live under the continual dread of such immeasurable evils is itself a grievous calamity. To live without the dread of them is to turn the danger into the disaster. The influence of such a France is equal to a war, its example more wasting than an hostile irruption. The hostility with any other power is separable and accidental: this power, by the very condition of

its existence, by its very essential constitution, is in a state of hostility with us, and with all civilized people.*

A government of the nature of that set up at our very door has never been hitherto seen or even imagined in Europe. What our relation to it will be cannot be judged by other relations. It is a serious thing to have a connection with a people who live only under positive, arbitrary, and changeable institutions, — and those not perfected nor supplied nor explained by any common, acknowledged rule of moral science. I remember, that, in one of my last conversations with the late Lord Camden, we were struck much in the same manner with the abolition in France of the law as a science of methodized and artificial equity. France, since her Revolution, is under the sway of a sect whose leaders have deliberately, at one stroke, demolished the whole body of that jurisprudence which France had pretty nearly in common with other civilized countries. In that jurisprudence were contained the elements and principles of the law of nations, the great ligament of mankind. With the law they have of course destroyed all seminaries in which jurisprudence was taught, as well as all the corporations established for its conservation. I have not heard of any country, whether in Europe or Asia, or even in Africa on this side of Mount Atlas, which is wholly without some such colleges and such corporations, except France. No man, in a public or private concern, can divine by what rule or principle her judgments are to be directed: nor is there to be found a professor in any university, or a practitioner in any court, who will hazard an opinion of what is

* See Declaration, Whitehall, October 29, 1793.

or is not law in France, in any case whatever. They have not only annulled all their old treaties, but they have renounced the law of nations, from whence treaties have their force. With a fixed design they have outlawed themselves, and to their power outlawed all other nations.

Instead of the religion and the law by which they were in a great politic communion with the Christian world, they have constructed their republic on three bases, all fundamentally opposite to those on which the communities of Europe are built. Its foundation is laid in Regicide, in Jacobinism, and in Atheism; and it has joined to those principles a body of systematic manners which secures their operation.

If I am asked how I would be understood in the use of these terms, Regicide, Jacobinism, Atheism, and a system of correspondent manners, and their establishment, I will tell you.

I call a commonwealth *Regicide* which lays it down as a fixed law of Nature and a fundamental right of man, that all government, not being a democracy, is an usurpation,* — that all kings, as such, are usurpers, and, for being kings, may and ought to be put to death, with their wives, families, and adherents. The commonwealth which acts uniformly upon those principles, and which, after abolishing

* Nothing could be more solemn than their promulgation of this principle, as a preamble to the destructive code of their famous articles for the decomposition of society, into whatever country they should enter. "La Convention Nationale, après avoir entendu le rapport de ses comités de finances, de la guerre, et diplomatiques réunis, fidèle *au principe de souveraineté de peuples, qui ne lui permet pas de reconnoître aucune institution qui y porte atteinte*," &c., &c. — *Décret sur le Rapport de Cambon, Dec.* 18, 1792. And see the subsequent proclamation.

every festival of religion, chooses the most flagrant act of a murderous regicide treason for a feast of eternal commemoration, and which forces all her people to observe it, — this I call *Regicide by Establishment.*

Jacobinism is the revolt of the enterprising talents of a country against its property. When private men form themselves into associations for the purpose of destroying the preëxisting laws and institutions of their country, — when they secure to themselves an army by dividing amongst the people of no property the estates of the ancient and lawful proprietors, — when a state recognizes those acts, — when it does not make confiscations for crimes, but makes crimes for confiscations, — when it has its principal strength and all its resources in such a violation of property, — when it stands chiefly upon such a violation, massacring by judgments, or otherwise, those who make any struggle for their old legal government, and their legal, hereditary, or acquired possessions, — I call this *Jacobinism by Establishment.*

I call it *Atheism by Establishment*, when any state, as such, shall not acknowledge the existence of God as a moral governor of the world, — when it shall offer to Him no religious or moral worship, — when it shall abolish the Christian religion by a regular decree, — when it shall persecute, with a cold, unrelenting, steady cruelty, by every mode of confiscation, imprisonment, exile, and death, all its ministers, — when it shall generally shut up or pull down churches, — when the few buildings which remain of this kind shall be opened only for the purpose of making a profane apotheosis of monsters whose vices and crimes have no parallel amongst men, and whom

all other men consider as objects of general detestation and the severest animadversion of law. When, in the place of that religion of social benevolence and of individual self-denial, in mockery of all religion, they institute impious, blasphemous, indecent theatric rites, in honor of their vitiated, perverted reason, and erect altars to the personification of their own corrupted and bloody republic, — when schools and seminaries are founded at public expense to poison mankind, from generation to generation, with the horrible maxims of this impiety, — when, wearied out with incessant martyrdom, and the cries of a people hungering and thirsting for religion, they permit it only as a tolerated evil, — I call this *Atheism by Establishment.*

When to these establishments of Regicide, of Jacobinism, and of Atheism, you add the *correspondent system of manners*, no doubt can be left on the mind of a thinking man concerning their determined hostility to the human race. Manners are of more importance than laws. Upon them, in a great measure, the laws depend. The law touches us but here and there, and now and then. Manners are what vex or soothe, corrupt or purify, exalt or debase, barbarize or refine us, by a constant, steady, uniform, insensible operation, like that of the air we breathe in. They give their whole form and color to our lives. According to their quality, they aid morals, they supply them, or they totally destroy them. Of this the new French legislators were aware; therefore, with the same method, and under the same authority, they settled a system of manners, the most licentious, prostitute, and abandoned that ever has been known, and at the same time the most coarse, rude,

savage, and ferocious. Nothing in the Revolution, no, not to a phrase or a gesture, not to the fashion of a hat or a shoe, was left to accident. All has been the result of design; all has been matter of institution. No mechanical means could be devised in favor of this incredible system of wickedness and vice, that has not been employed. The noblest passions, the love of glory, the love of country, have been debauched into means of its preservation and its propagation. All sorts of shows and exhibitions, calculated to inflame and vitiate the imagination and pervert the moral sense, have been contrived. They have sometimes brought forth five or six hundred drunken women calling at the bar of the Assembly for the blood of their own children, as being Royalists or Constitutionalists. Sometimes they have got a body of wretches, calling themselves fathers, to demand the murder of their sons, boasting that Rome had but one Brutus, but that they could show five hundred. There were instances in which they inverted and retaliated the impiety, and produced sons who called for the execution of their parents. The foundation of their republic is laid in moral paradoxes. Their patriotism is always prodigy. All those instances to be found in history, whether real or fabulous, of a doubtful public spirit, at which morality is perplexed, reason is staggered, and from which affrighted Nature recoils, are their chosen and almost sole examples for the instruction of their youth.

The whole drift of their institution is contrary to that of the wise legislators of all countries, who aimed at improving instincts into morals, and at grafting the virtues on the stock of the natural affections. They, on the contrary, have omitted no pains to eradicate

every benevolent and noble propensity in the mind of men. In their culture it is a rule always to graft virtues on vices. They think everything unworthy of the name of public virtue, unless it indicates violence on the private. All their new institutions (and with them everything is new) strike at the root of our social nature. Other legislators, knowing that marriage is the origin of all relations, and consequently the first element of all duties, have endeavored by every art to make it sacred. The Christian religion, by confining it to the pairs, and by rendering that relation indissoluble, has by these two things done more towards the peace, happiness, settlement, and civilization of the world than by any other part in this whole scheme of Divine wisdom. The direct contrary course has been taken in the synagogue of Antichrist, — I mean in that forge and manufactory of all evil, the sect which predominated in the Constituent Assembly of 1789. Those monsters employed the same or greater industry to desecrate and degrade that state, which other legislators have used to render it holy and honorable. By a strange, uncalled-for declaration, they pronounced that marriage was no better than a common civil contract. It was one of their ordinary tricks, to put their sentiments into the mouths of certain personated characters, which they theatrically exhibited at the bar of what ought to be a serious assembly. One of these was brought out in the figure of a prostitute, whom they called by the affected name of "a mother without being a wife." This creature they made to call for a repeal of the incapacities which in civilized states are put upon bastards. The prostitutes of the Assembly gave to this their puppet the sanction of their

greater impudence. In consequence of the principles laid down, and the manners authorized, bastards were not long after put on the footing of the issue of lawful unions. Proceeding in the spirit of the first authors of their Constitution, succeeding Assemblies went the full length of the principle, and gave a license to divorce at the mere pleasure of either party, and at a month's notice. With them the matrimonial connection is brought into so degraded a state of concubinage, that I believe none of the wretches in London who keep warehouses of infamy would give out one of their victims to private custody on so short and insolent a tenure. There was, indeed, a kind of profligate equity in giving to women the same licentious power. The reason they assigned was as infamous as the act: declaring that women had been too long under the tyranny of parents and of husbands. It is not necessary to observe upon the horrible consequences of taking one half of the species wholly out of the guardianship and protection of the other.

The practice of divorce, though in some countries permitted, has been discouraged in all. In the East, polygamy and divorce are in discredit; and the manners correct the laws. In Rome, whilst Rome was in its integrity, the few causes allowed for divorce amounted in effect to a prohibition. They were only three. The arbitrary was totally excluded; and accordingly some hundreds of years passed without a single example of that kind. When manners were corrupted, the laws were relaxed; as the latter always follow the former, when they are not able to regulate them or to vanquish them. Of this circumstance the legislators of vice and crime were pleased to take notice, as an inducement to adopt their regu

lation: holding out an hope that the permission would as rarely be made use of. They knew the contrary to be true; and they had taken good care that the laws should be well seconded by the manners. Their law of divorce, like all their laws, had not for its object the relief of domestic uneasiness, but the total corruption of all morals, the total disconnection of social life.

It is a matter of curiosity to observe the operation of this encouragement to disorder. I have before me the Paris paper correspondent to the usual register of births, marriages, and deaths. Divorce, happily, is no regular head of registry amongst civilized nations. With the Jacobins it is remarkable that divorce is not only a regular head, but it has the post of honor. It occupies the first place in the list. In the three first months of the year 1793 the number of divorces in that city amounted to 562; the marriages were 1785: so that the proportion of divorces to marriages was not much less than one to three: a thing unexampled, I believe, among mankind. I caused an inquiry to be made at Doctors' Commons concerning the number of divorces, and found that all the divorces (which, except by special act of Parliament, are separations, and not proper divorces) did not amount in all those courts, and in an hundred years, to much more than one fifth of those that passed in the single city of Paris in three months. I followed up the inquiry relative to that city through several of the subsequent months, until I was tired, and found the proportions still the same. Since then I have heard that they have declared for a revisal of these laws: but I know of nothing done. It appears as if the contract that renovates the world was under no law

at all. From this we may take our estimate of the havoc that has been made through all the relations of life. With the Jacobins of France, vague intercourse is without reproach; marriage is reduced to the vilest concubinage; children are encouraged to cut the throats of their parents; mothers are taught that tenderness is no part of their character, and, to demonstrate their attachment to their party, that they ought to make no scruple to rake with their bloody hands in the bowels of those who came from their own.

To all this let us join the practice of *cannibalism*, with which, in the proper terms, and with the greatest truth, their several factions accuse each other. By cannibalism I mean their devouring, as a nutriment of their ferocity, some part of the bodies of those they have murdered, their drinking the blood of their victims, and forcing the victims themselves to drink the blood of their kindred slaughtered before their faces. By cannibalism I mean also to signify all their nameless, unmanly, and abominable insults on the bodies of those they slaughter.

As to those whom they suffer to die a natural death, they do not permit them to enjoy the last consolations of mankind, or those rights of sepulture which indicate hope, and which mere Nature has taught to mankind, in all countries, to soothe the afflictions and to cover the infirmity of mortal condition. They disgrace men in the entry into life, they vitiate and enslave them through the whole course of it, and they deprive them of all comfort at the conclusion of their dishonored and depraved existence. Endeavoring to persuade the people that they are no better than beasts, the whole body of their institution

tends to make them beasts of prey, furious and savage. For this purpose the active part of them is disciplined into a ferocity which has no parallel. To this ferocity there is joined not one of the rude, unfashioned virtues which accompany the vices, where the whole are left to grow up together in the rankness of uncultivated Nature. But nothing is left to Nature in their systems.

The same discipline which hardens their hearts relaxes their morals. Whilst courts of justice were thrust out by revolutionary tribunals, and silent churches were only the funeral monuments of departed religion, there were no fewer than nineteen or twenty theatres, great and small, most of them kept open at the public expense, and all of them crowded every night. Among the gaunt, haggard forms of famine and nakedness, amidst the yells of murder, the tears of affliction, and the cries of despair, the song, the dance, the mimic scene, the buffoon laughter, went on as regularly as in the gay hour of festive peace. I have it from good authority, that under the scaffold of judicial murder, and the gaping planks that poured down blood on the spectators, the space was hired out for a show of dancing dogs. I think, without concert, we have made the very same remark, on reading some of their pieces, which, being written for other purposes, let us into a view of their social life. It struck us that the habits of Paris had no resemblance to the finished virtues, or to the polished vice, and elegant, though not blameless luxury, of the capital of a great empire. Their society was more like that of a den of outlaws upon a doubtful frontier, — of a lewd tavern for the revels and debauches of banditti, assassins,

bravoes, smugglers, and their more desperate paramours, mixed with bombastic players, the refuse and rejected offal of strolling theatres, puffing out ill-sorted verses about virtue, mixed with the licentious and blasphemous songs proper to the brutal and hardened course of life belonging to that sort of wretches. This system of manners in itself is at war with all orderly and moral society, and is in its neighborhood unsafe. If great bodies of that kind were anywhere established in a bordering territory, we should have a right to demand of their governments the suppression of such a nuisance. What are we to do, if the government and the whole community is of the same description? Yet that government has thought proper to invite ours to lay by its unjust hatred, and to listen to the voice of humanity as taught by their example.

The operation of dangerous and delusive first principles obliges us to have recourse to the true ones. In the intercourse between nations, we are apt to rely too much on the instrumental part. We lay too much weight upon the formality of treaties and compacts. We do not act much more wisely, when we trust to the interests of men as guaranties of their engagements. The interests frequently tear to pieces the engagements, and the passions trample upon both. Entirely to trust to either is to disregard our own safety, or not to know mankind. Men are not tied to one another by papers and seals. They are led to associate by resemblances, by conformities, by sympathies. It is with nations as with individuals. Nothing is so strong a tie of amity between nation and nation as correspondence in laws, customs, manners, and habits of life. They have more than the force of treaties in themselves. They are obligations

written in the heart. They approximate men to men without their knowledge, and sometimes against their intentions. The secret, unseen, but irrefragable bond of habitual intercourse holds them together, even when their perverse and litigious nature sets them to equivocate, scuffle, and fight about the terms of their written obligations.

As to war, if it be the means of wrong and violence, it is the sole means of justice amongst nations. Nothing can banish it from the world. They who say otherwise, intending to impose upon us, do not impose upon themselves. But it is one of the greatest objects of human wisdom to mitigate those evils which we are unable to remove. The conformity and analogy of which I speak, incapable, like everything else, of preserving perfect trust and tranquillity among men, has a strong tendency to facilitate accommodation, and to produce a generous oblivion of the rancor of their quarrels. With this similitude, peace is more of peace, and war is less of war. I will go further. There have been periods of time in which communities apparently in peace with each other have been more perfectly separated than in later times many nations in Europe have been in the course of long and bloody wars. The cause must be sought in the similitude throughout Europe of religion, laws, and manners. At bottom, these are all the same. The writers on public law have often called this *aggregate* of nations a commonwealth. They had reason. It is virtually one great state, having the same basis of general law, with some diversity of provincial customs and local establishments. The nations of Europe have had the very same Christian religion, agreeing in the fundamental parts, varying a little

in the ceremonies and in the subordinate doctrines The whole of the polity and economy of every country in Europe has been derived from the same sources. It was drawn from the old Germanic or Gothic Custumary, — from the feudal institutions, which must be considered as an emanation from that Custumary; and the whole has been improved and digested into system and discipline by the Roman law. From hence arose the several orders, with or without a monarch, (which are called States,) in every European country; the strong traces of which, where monarchy predominated, were never wholly extinguished or merged in despotism. In the few places where monarchy was cast off, the spirit of European monarchy was still left. Those countries still continued countries of States, — that is, of classes, orders, and distinctions, such as had before subsisted, or nearly so. Indeed, the force and form of the institution called States continued in greater perfection in those republican communities than under monarchies. From all those sources arose a system of manners and of education which was nearly similar in all this quarter of the globe, — and which softened, blended, and harmonized the colors of the whole. There was little difference in the form of the universities for the education of their youth, whether with regard to faculties, to sciences, or to the more liberal and elegant kinds of erudition. From this resemblance in the modes of intercourse, and in the whole form and fashion of life, no citizen of Europe could be altogether an exile in any part of it. There was nothing more than a pleasing variety to recreate and instruct the mind, to enrich the imagination, and to meliorate the heart. When a man travelled or

resided, for health, pleasure, business, or necessity, from his own country, he never felt himself quite abroad.

The whole body of this new scheme of manners, in support of the new scheme of politics, I consider as a strong and decisive proof of determined ambition and systematic hostility. I defy the most refining ingenuity to invent any other cause for the total departure of the Jacobin Republic from every one of the ideas and usages, religious, legal, moral, or social, of this civilized world, and for her tearing herself from its communion with such studied violence, but from a formed resolution of keeping no terms with that world. It has not been, as has been falsely and insidiously represented, that these miscreants had only broke with their old government. They made a schism with the whole universe, and that schism extended to almost everything, great and small. For one, I wish, since it is gone thus far, that the breach had been so complete as to make all intercourse impracticable: but, partly by accident, partly by design, partly from the resistance of the matter, enough is left to preserve intercourse, whilst amity is destroyed or corrupted in its principle.

This violent breach of the community of Europe we must conclude to have been made (even if they had not expressly declared it over and over again) either to force mankind into an adoption of their system or to live in perpetual enmity with a community the most potent we have ever known. Can any person imagine, that, in offering to mankind this desperate alternative, there is no indication of a hostile mind, because men in possession of the ruling authority are supposed to have a right to act without coercion in

their own territories? As to the right of men to act anywhere according to their pleasure, without any moral tie, no such right exists. Men are never in a state of *total* independence of each other. It is not the condition of our nature: nor is it conceivable how any man can pursue a considerable course of action without its having some effect upon others, or, of course, without producing some degree of responsibility for his conduct. The *situations* in which men relatively stand produce the rules and principles of that responsibility, and afford directions to prudence in exacting it.

Distance of place does not extinguish the duties or the rights of men; but it often renders their exercise impracticable. The same circumstance of distance renders the noxious effects of an evil system in any community less pernicious. But there are situations where this difficulty does not occur, and in which, therefore, these duties are obligatory and these rights are to be asserted. It has ever been the method of public jurists to draw a great part of the analogies on which they form the law of nations from the principles of law which prevail in civil community. Civil laws are not all of them merely positive. Those which are rather conclusions of legal reason than matters of statutable provision belong to universal equity, and are universally applicable. Almost the whole prætorian law is such. There is a *law of neighborhood* which does not leave a man perfect master on his own ground. When a neighbor sees a *new erection*, in the nature of a nuisance, set up at his door, he has a right to represent it to the judge, who, on his part, has a right to order the work to be stayed, or, if established, to be removed. On

this head the parent law is express and clear, and has made many wise provisions, which, without destroying, regulate and restrain the right of *ownership* by the right of *vicinage*. No *innovation* is permitted that may redound, even secondarily, to the prejudice of a neighbor. The whole doctrine of that important head of prætorian law, "*De novi operis nunciatione*," is founded on the principle, that no *new* use should be made of a man's private liberty of operating upon his private property, from whence a detriment may be justly apprehended by his neighbor. This law of denunciation is prospective. It is to anticipate what is called *damnum infectum* or *damnum nondum factum*, that is, a damage justly apprehended, but not actually done. Even before it is clearly known whether the innovation be damageable or not, the judge is competent to issue a prohibition to innovate until the point can be determined. This prompt interference is grounded on principles favorable to both parties. It is preventive of mischief difficult to be repaired, and of ill blood difficult to be softened. The rule of law, therefore, which comes before the evil is amongst the very best parts of equity, and justifies the promptness of the remedy; because, as it is well observed, "*Res damni infecti celeritatem desiderat, et periculosa est dilatio.*" This right of denunciation does not hold, when things continue, however inconveniently to the neighborhood, according to the *ancient* mode. For there is a sort of presumption against novelty, drawn out of a deep consideration of human nature and human affairs; and the maxim of jurisprudence is well laid down, "*Vetustas pro lege semper habetur.*"

Such is the law of civil vicinity. Now where there

is no constituted judge, as between independent states there is not, the vicinage itself is the natural judge. It is, preventively, the assertor of its own rights, or, remedially, their avenger. Neighbors are presumed to take cognizance of each other's acts. "*Vicini vicinorum facta præsumuntur scire.*" This principle, which, like the rest, is as true of nations as of individual men, has bestowed on the grand vicinage of Europe a duty to know and a right to prevent any capital innovation which may amount to the erection of a dangerous nuisance.* Of the importance of that innovation, and the mischief of that nuisance, they are, to be sure, bound to judge not litigiously: but it is in their competence to judge. They have uniformly acted on this right. What in civil society is a ground of action in politic society is a ground of war. But the exercise of that competent jurisdiction is a matter of moral prudence. As suits in civil society, so war in the political, must ever be a matter of great deliberation. It is not this or that particular proceeding, picked out here and there, as a subject of quarrel, that will do. There must be an aggregate of mischief. There must be marks of deliberation; there must be traces of design; there must be indications of malice; there must be tokens of ambition. There must be force in the body where they exist; there must be energy in the mind. When all these circumstances combine, or the important parts of them, the duty of the vicin-

* "This state of things cannot exist in France, without involving all the surrounding powers in one common danger, — without giving them the right, without imposing it upon them as a duty, to stop the progress of an evil which . . . . attacks the fundamental principles by which mankind is united in the bonds of civil society." — *Declaration, 29th Oct.*, 1793.

ity calls for the exercise of its competence: and the rules of prudence do not restrain, but demand it.

In describing the nuisance erected by so pestilential a manufactory, by the construction of so infamous a brothel, by digging a night-cellar for such thieves, murderers, and house-breakers as never infested the world, I am so far from aggravating, that I have fallen infinitely short of the evil. No man who has attended to the particulars of what has been done in France, and combined them with the principles there asserted, can possibly doubt it. When I compare with this great cause of nations the trifling points of honor, the still more contemptible points of interest, the light ceremonies, the undefinable punctilios, the disputes about precedency, the lowering or the hoisting of a sail, the dealing in a hundred or two of wildcat-skins on the other side of the globe, which have often kindled up the flames of war between nations, I stand astonished at those persons who do not feel a resentment, not more natural than politic, at the atrocious insults that this monstrous compound offers to the dignity of every nation, and who are not alarmed with what it threatens to their safety.

I have therefore been decidedly of opinion, with our declaration at Whitehall in the beginning of this war, that the vicinage of Europe had not only a right, but an indispensable duty and an exigent interest, to denunciate this new work, before it had produced the danger we have so sorely felt, and which we shall long feel. The example of what is done by France is too important not to have a vast and extensive influence; and that example, backed with its power, must bear with great force on those

who are near it, especially on those who shall recognize the pretended republic on the principle upon which it now stands. It is not an old structure, which you have found as it is, and are not to dispute of the original end and design with which it had been so fashioned. It is a recent wrong, and can plead no prescription. It violates the rights upon which not only the community of France, but those on which all communities are founded. The principles on which they proceed are *general* principles, and are as true in England as in any other country. They who (though with the purest intentions) recognize the authority of these regicides and robbers upon principle justify their acts, and establish them as precedents. It is a question not between France and England; it is a question between property and force. The property claims; and its claim has been allowed. The property of the nation is the nation. They who massacre, plunder, and expel the body of the proprietary are murderers and robbers. The state, in its essence, must be moral and just: and it may be so, though a tyrant or usurper should be accidentally at the head of it. This is a thing to be lamented: but this notwithstanding, the body of the commonwealth may remain in all its integrity and be perfectly sound in its composition. The present case is different. It is not a revolution in government. It is not the victory of party over party. It is a destruction and decomposition of the whole society; which never can be made of right by any faction, however powerful, nor without terrible consequences to all about it, both in the act and in the example. This pretended republic is founded in crimes, and exists by wrong and robbery; and wrong and rob-

bery, far from a title to anything, is war with mankind. To be at peace with robbery is to be an accomplice with it.

Mere locality does not constitute a body politic. Had Cade and his gang got possession of London, they would not have been the lord mayor, aldermen, and common council. The body politic of France existed in the majesty of its throne, in the dignity of its nobility, in the honor of its gentry, in the sanctity of its clergy, in the reverence of its magistracy, in the weight and consideration due to its landed property in the several bailliages, in the respect due to its movable substance represented by the corporations of the kingdom. All these particular *moleculæ* united form the great mass of what is truly the body politic in all countries. They are so many deposits and receptacles of justice; because they can only exist by justice. Nation is a moral essence, not a geographical arrangement, or a denomination of the nomenclator. France, though out of her territorial possession, exists; because the sole possible claimant, I mean the proprietary, and the government to which the proprietary adheres, exists and claims. God forbid, that if you were expelled from your house by ruffians and assassins, that I should call the material walls, doors, and windows of——— the ancient and honorable family of———! Am I to transfer to the intruders, who, not content to turn you out naked to the world, would rob you of your very name, all the esteem and respect I owe to you? The Regicides in France are not France. France is out of her bounds, but the kingdom is the same.

To illustrate my opinions on this subject, let us suppose a case, which, after what has happened, we

cannot think absolutely impossible, though the augury is to be abominated, and the event deprecated with our most ardent prayers. Let us suppose, then, that our gracious sovereign was sacrilegiously murdered; his exemplary queen, at the head of the matronage of this land, murdered in the same manner; that those princesses whose beauty and modest elegance are the ornaments of the country, and who are the leaders and patterns of the ingenuous youth of their sex, were put to a cruel and ignominious death, with hundreds of others, mothers and daughters, ladies of the first distinction; that the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York, princes the hope and pride of the nation, with all their brethren, were forced to fly from the knives of assassins; that the whole body of our excellent clergy were either massacred or robbed of all and transported; the Christian religion, in all its denominations, forbidden and persecuted; the law totally, fundamentally, and in all its parts, destroyed; the judges put to death by revolutionary tribunals; the peers and commons robbed to the last acre of their estates, massacred, if they stayed, or obliged to seek life in flight, in exile, and in beggary; that the whole landed property should share the very same fate; that every military and naval officer of honor and rank, almost to a man, should be placed in the same description of confiscation and exile; that the principal merchants and bankers should be drawn out, as from an hen-coop, for slaughter; that the citizens of our greatest and most flourishing cities, when the hand and the machinery of the hangman were not found sufficient, should have been collected in the public squares and massacred by thousands with cannon; if three

hundred thousand others should have been doomed to a situation worse than death in noisome and pestilential prisons. In such a case, is it in the faction of robbers I am to look for my country? Would this be the England that you and I, and even strangers, admired, honored, loved, and cherished? Would not the exiles of England alone be my government and my fellow-citizens? Would not their places of refuge be my temporary country? Would not all my duties and all my affections be there, and there only? Should I consider myself as a traitor to my country, and deserving of death, if I knocked at the door and heart of every potentate in Christendom to succor my friends, and to avenge them on their enemies? Could I in any way show myself more a patriot? What should I think of those potentates who insulted their suffering brethren, — who treated them as vagrants, or at least as mendicants, — and could find no allies, no friends, but in regicide murderers and robbers? What ought I to think and feel, if, being geographers instead of kings, they recognized the desolated cities, the wasted fields, and the rivers polluted with blood, of this geometrical measurement, as the honorable member of Europe called England? In that condition, what should we think of Sweden, Denmark, or Holland, or whatever power afforded us a churlish and treacherous hospitality, if they should invite us to join the standard of our king, our laws, and our religion, — if they should give us a direct promise of protection, — if, after all this, taking advantage of our deplorable situation, which left us no choice, they were to treat us as the lowest and vilest of all mercenaries, — if they were to send us far from the aid of our king and

our suffering country, to squander us away in the most pestilential climates for a venal enlargement of their own territories, for the purpose of trucking them, when obtained, with those very robbers and murderers they had called upon us to oppose with our blood? What would be our sentiments, if in that miserable service we were not to be considered either as English, or as Swedes, Dutch, Danes, but as outcasts of the human race? Whilst we were fighting those battles of their interest and as their soldiers, how should we feel, if we were to be excluded from all their cartels? How must we feel, if the pride and flower of the English nobility and gentry, who might escape the pestilential clime and the devouring sword, should, if taken prisoners, be delivered over as rebel subjects, to be condemned as rebels, as traitors, as the vilest of all criminals, by tribunals formed of Maroon negro slaves, covered over with the blood of their masters, who were made free and organized into judges for their robberies and murders? What should we feel under this inhuman, insulting, and barbarous protection of Muscovites, Swedes, or Hollanders? Should we not obtest Heaven, and whatever justice there is yet on earth? Oppression makes wise men mad; but the distemper is still the madness of the wise, which is better than the sobriety of fools. Their cry is the voice of sacred misery, exalted, not into wild raving, but into the sanctified frenzy of prophecy and inspiration. In that bitterness of soul, in that indignation of suffering virtue, in that exaltation of despair, would not persecuted English loyalty cry out with an awful warning voice, and denounce the destruction that waits on monarchs who consider fidel-

ity to them as the most degrading of all vices, who suffer it to be punished as the most abominable of all crimes, and who have no respect but for rebels, traitors, regicides, and furious negro slaves, whose crimes have broke their chains? Would not this warm language of high indignation have more of sound reason in it, more of real affection, more of true attachment, than all the lullabies of flatterers who would hush monarchs to sleep in the arms of death? Let them be well convinced, that, if ever this example should prevail in its whole extent, it will have its full operation. Whilst kings stand firm on their base, though under that base there is a sure-wrought mine, there will not be wanting to their levees a single person of those who are attached to their fortune, and not to their persons or cause; but hereafter none will support a tottering throne. Some will fly for fear of being crushed under the ruin; some will join in making it. They will seek, in the destruction of royalty, fame and power and wealth and the homage of kings, with Reubell, with Carnot, with Révellière, and with the Merlins and the Talliens, rather than suffer exile and beggary with the Condés, or the Broglies, the Castries, the D'Avarays, the Sérents, the Cazalès, and the long line of loyal, suffering, patriot nobility, or to be butchered with the oracles and the victims of the laws, the D'Ormessons, the D'Esprémesnils, and the Malesherbes. This example we shall give, if, instead of adhering to our fellows in a cause which is an honor to us all, we abandon the lawful government and lawful corporate body of France, to hunt for a shameful and ruinous fraternity with this odious usurpation that disgraces civilized society and the human race.

[And is, then, example nothing? It is everything. Example is the school of mankind, and they will learn at no other.] This war is a war against that example. It is not a war for Louis the Eighteenth, or even for the property, virtue, fidelity of France. It is a war for George the Third, for Francis the Second, and for all the dignity, property, honor, virtue, and religion of England, of Germany, and of all nations.

I know that all I have said of the systematic unsociability of this new-invented species of republic, and the impossibility of preserving peace, is answered by asserting that the scheme of manners, morals, and even of maxims and principles of state, is of no weight in a question of peace or war between communities This doctrine is supported by example. The case of Algiers is cited, with an hint, as if it were the stronger case. I should take no notice of this sort of inducement, if I had found it only where first it was. I do not want respect for those from whom I first heard it; but, having no controversy at present with them, I only think it not amiss to rest on it a little, as I find it adopted, with much more of the same kind, by several of those on whom such reasoning had formerly made no apparent impression. If it had no force to prevent us from submitting to this necessary war, it furnishes no better ground for our making an unnecessary and ruinous peace.

This analogical argument drawn from the case of Algiers would lead us a good way. The fact is, we ourselves with a little cover, others more directly, pay a *tribute* to the Republic of Algiers. Is it meant to reconcile us to the payment of a *tribute* to the French Republic? That this, with other things more ruinous, will be demanded hereafter, I little

doubt; but for the present this will not be avowed, — though our minds are to be gradually prepared for it. In truth, the arguments from this case are worth little, even to those who approve the buying an Algerine forbearance of piracy. There are many things which men do not approve, that they must do to avoid a greater evil. To argue from thence that they are to act in the same manner in all cases is turning necessity into a law. Upon what is matter of prudence, the argument concludes the contrary way. Because we have done one humiliating act, we ought with infinite caution to admit more acts of the same nature, lest humiliation should become our habitual state. Matters of prudence are under the dominion of circumstances, and not of logical analogies. It is absurd to take it otherwise.

I, for one, do more than doubt the policy of this kind of convention with Algiers. On those who think as I do the argument *ad hominem* can make no sort of impression. I know something of the constitution and composition of this very extraordinay republic. It has a constitution, I admit, similar to the present tumultuous military tyranny of France, by which an handful of obscure ruffians domineer over a fertile country and a brave people. For the composition, too, I admit the Algerine community resembles that of France, — being formed out of the very scum, scandal, disgrace, and pest of the Turkish Asia. The Grand Seignior, to disburden the country, suffers the Dey to recruit in his dominions the corps of janizaries, or asaphs, which form the Directory and Council of Elders of the African Republic one and indivisible. But notwithstanding this resemblance, which I allow, I never shall so far injure the Janizarian Re-

public of Algiers as to put it in comparison, for every sort of crime, turpitude, and oppression, with the Jacobin Republic of Paris. There is no question with me to which of the two I should choose to be a neighbor or a subject. But, situated as I am, I am in no danger of becoming to Algiers either the one or the other. It is not so in my relation to the atheistical fanatics of France. I *am* their neighbor; I *may* become their subject. Have the gentlemen who borrowed this happy parallel no idea of the different conduct to be held with regard to the very same evil at an immense distance and when it is at your door? when its power is enormous, as when it is comparatively as feeble as its distance is remote? when there is a barrier of language and usages, which prevents corruption through certain old correspondences and habitudes, from the contagion of the horrible novelties that are introduced into everything else? I can contemplate without dread a royal or a national tiger on the borders of Pegu. I can look at him with an easy curiosity, as prisoner within bars in the menagerie of the Tower. But if, by *Habeas Corpus*, or otherwise, he was to come into the lobby of the House of Commons whilst your door was open, any of you would be more stout than wise who would not gladly make your escape out of the back windows. I certainly should dread more from a wild-cat in my bedchamber than from all the lions that roar in the deserts behind Algiers. But in this parallel it is the cat that is at a distance, and the lions and tigers that are in our antechambers and our lobbies. Algiers is not near; Algiers is not powerful; Algiers is not our neighbor; Algiers is not infectious. Algiers, whatever it may be, is an old creation; and we have

good data to calculate all the mischief to be apprehended from it. When I find Algiers transferred to Calais, I will tell you what I think of that point. In the mean time, the case quoted from the Algerine Reports will not apply as authority. We shall put it out of court; and so far as that goes, let the counsel for the Jacobin peace take nothing by their motion.

When we voted, as you and I did, with many more whom you and I respect and love, to resist this enemy, we were providing for dangers that were direct, home, pressing, and not remote, contingent, uncertain, and formed upon loose analogies. We judged of the danger with which we were menaced by Jacobin France from the whole tenor of her conduct, not from one or two doubtful or detached acts or expressions. I not only concurred in the idea of combining with Europe in this war, but to the best of my power even stimulated ministers to that conjunction of interests and of efforts. I joined them with all my soul, on the principles contained in that manly and masterly state-paper which I have two or three times referred to,* and may still more frequently hereafter. The diplomatic collection never was more enriched than with this piece. The historic facts justify every stroke of the master. "Thus painters write their names at Co."

Various persons may concur in the same measure on various grounds. They may be various, without being contrary to or exclusive of each other. I thought the insolent, unprovoked aggression of the Regicide upon our ally of Holland a good ground of war. I think his manifest attempt to overturn the balance of Europe a good ground of war. As a good

* Declaration, Whitehall, Oct. 29, 1793.

ground of war I consider his declaration of war on his Majesty and his kingdom. But though I have taken all these to my aid, I consider them as nothing more than as a sort of evidence to indicate the treasonable mind within. Long before their acts of aggression and their declaration of war, the faction in France had assumed a form, had adopted a body of principles and maxims, and had regularly and systematically acted on them, by which she virtually had put herself in a posture which was in itself a declaration of war against mankind.

It is said by the Directory, in their several manifestoes, that we of the people are tumultuous for peace, and that ministers pretend negotiation to amuse us. This they have learned from the language of many amongst ourselves, whose conversations have been one main cause of whatever extent the opinion for peace with Regicide may be. But I, who think the ministers unfortunately to be but too serious in their proceedings, find myself obliged to say a little more on this subject of the popular opinion.

Before our opinions are quoted against ourselves, it is proper, that, from our serious deliberation, they may be worth quoting. It is without reason we praise the wisdom of our Constitution in putting under the discretion of the crown the awful trust of war and peace, if the ministers of the crown virtually return it again into our hands. The trust was placed there as a sacred deposit, to secure us against popular rashness in plunging into wars, and against the effects of popular dismay, disgust, or lassitude, in getting out of them as imprudently as we might first engage in them. To have no other measure in judg-

ing of those great objects than our momentary opinions and desires is to throw us back upon that very democracy which, in this part, our Constitution was formed to avoid.

It is no excuse at all for a minister who at our desire takes a measure contrary to our safety, that it is our own act. He who does not stay the hand of suicide is guilty of murder. On our part, I say, that to be instructed is not to be degraded or enslaved. Information is an advantage to us; and we have a right to demand it. He that is bound to act in the dark cannot be said to act freely. When it appears evident to our governors that our desires and our interests are at variance, they ought not to gratify the former at the expense of the latter. Statesmen are placed on an eminence, that they may have a larger horizon than we can possibly command. They have a whole before them, which we can contemplate only in the parts, and often without the necessary relations. Ministers are not only our natural rulers, but our natural guides. Reason, clearly and manfully delivered, has in itself a mighty force; but reason in the mouth of legal authority is, I may fairly say, irresistible.

I admit that reason of state will not, in many circumstances, permit the disclosure of the true ground of a public proceeding. In that case silence is manly, and it is wise. It is fair to call for trust, when the principle of reason itself suspends its public use. I take the distinction to be this: the ground of a particular measure making a part of a plan it is rarely proper to divulge; all the broader grounds of policy, on which the general plan is to be adopted, ought as rarely to be concealed. They who have not the

whole cause before them, call them politicians, call them people, call them what you will, are no judges. The difficulties of the case, as well as its fair side, ought to be presented. This ought to be done; and it is all that can be done. When we have our true situation distinctly presented to us, if then we resolve, with a blind and headlong violence, to resist the admonitions of our friends, and to cast ourselves into the hands of our potent and irreconcilable foes, then, and not till then, the ministers stand acquitted before God and man for whatever may come.

Lamenting, as I do, that the matter has not had so full and free a discussion as it requires, I mean to omit none of the points which seem to me necessary for consideration, previous to an arrangement which is forever to decide the form and the fate of Europe. In the course, therefore, of what I shall have the honor to address to you, I propose the following questions to your serious thoughts. — 1. Whether the present system, which stands for a government, in France, be such as in peace and war affects the neighboring states in a manner different from the internal government that formerly prevailed in that country? — 2. Whether that system, supposing its views hostile to other nations, possesses any means of being hurtful to them peculiar to itself? — 3. Whether there has been lately such a change in France as to alter the nature of its system, or its effect upon other powers? — 4. Whether any public declarations or engagements exist, on the part of the allied powers, which stand in the way of a treaty of peace which supposes the right and confirms the power of the Regicide faction in France? — 5. What the state of the other powers of Europe will be with respect to each other and their

colonies, on the conclusion of a Regicide peace? — 6. Whether we are driven to the absolute necessity of making that kind of peace?

These heads of inquiry will enable us to make the application of the several matters of fact and topics of argument, that occur in this vast discussion, to certain fixed principles. I do not mean to confine myself to the order in which they stand. I shall discuss them in such a manner as shall appear to me the best adapted for showing their mutual bearings and relations. Here, then, I close the public matter of my letter; but before I have done, let me say one word in apology for myself.

In wishing this nominal peace not to be precipitated, I am sure no man living is less disposed to blame the present ministry than I am. Some of my oldest friends (and I wish I could say it of more of them) make a part in that ministry. There are some, indeed, "whom my dim eyes in vain explore." In my mind, a greater calamity could not have fallen on the public than the exclusion of one of them. But I drive away that, with other melancholy thoughts. A great deal ought to be said upon that subject, or nothing. As to the distinguished persons to whom my friends who remain are joined, if benefits nobly and generously conferred ought to procure good wishes, they are entitled to my best vows; and they have them all. They have administered to me the only consolation I am capable of receiving, which is, to know that no individual will suffer by my thirty years' service to the public. If things should give us the comparative happiness of a struggle, I shall be found, I was going to say fighting, (that would be foolish,) but dying, by the side of Mr. Pitt. I must

add, that, if anything defensive in our domestic system can possibly save us from the disasters of a Regicide peace, he is the man to save us. If the finances in such a case can be repaired, he is the man to repair them. If I should lament any of his acts, it is only when they appear to me to have no resemblance to acts of his. But let him not have a confidence in himself which no human abilities can warrant. His abilities are fully equal (and that is to say much for any man) to those which are opposed to him. But if we look to him as our security against the consequences of a Regicide peace, let us be assured that a Regicide peace and a constitutional ministry are terms that will not agree. With a Regicide peace the king cannot long have a minister to serve him, nor the minister a king to serve. If the Great Disposer, in reward of the royal and the private virtues of our sovereign, should call him from the calamitous spectacles which will attend a state of amity with Regicide, his successor will surely see them, unless the same Providence greatly anticipates the course of Nature. Thinking thus, (and not, as I conceive, on light grounds,) I dare not flatter the reigning sovereign, nor any minister he has or can have, nor his successor apparent, nor any of those who may be called to serve him, with what appears to me a false state of their situation. We cannot have them and that peace together.

I do not forget that there had been a considerable difference between several of our friends (with my insignificant self) and the great man at the head of ministry, in an early stage of these discussions. But I am sure there was a period in which we agreed better in the danger of a Jacobin existence in France.

At one time he and all Europe seemed to feel it. But why am not I converted with so many great powers and so many great ministers? It is because I am old and slow. I am in this year, 1796, only where all the powers of Europe were in 1793. I cannot move with this precession of the equinoxes, which is preparing for us the return of some very old, I am afraid no golden era, or the commencement of some new era that must be denominated from some new metal. In this crisis I must hold my tongue or I must speak with freedom. Falsehood and delusion are allowed in no case whatever: but, as in the exercise of all the virtues, there is an economy of truth. It is a sort of temperance, by which a man speaks truth with measure, that he may speak it the longer. But as the same rules do not hold in all cases, what would be right for you, who may presume on a series of years before you, would have no sense for me, who cannot, without absurdity, calculate on six months of life. What I say I *must* say at once. Whatever I write is in its nature testamentary. It may have the weakness, but it has the sincerity, of a dying declaration. For the few days I have to linger here I am removed completely from the busy scene of the world; but I hold myself to be still responsible for everything that I have done whilst I continued on the place of action. If the rawest tyro in politics has been influenced by the authority of my gray hairs, and led by anything in my speeches or my writings to enter into this war, he has a right to call upon me to know why I have changed my opinions, or why, when those I voted with have adopted better notions, I persevere in exploded error.

When I seem not to acquiesce in the acts of those

I respect in every degree short of superstition, I am obliged to give my reasons fully. I cannot set my authority against their authority. But to exert reason is not to revolt against authority. Reason and authority do not move in the same parallel. That reason is an *amicus curiæ* who speaks *de plano*, not *pro tribunali*. It is a friend who makes an useful suggestion to the court, without questioning its jurisdiction. Whilst he acknowledges its competence, he promotes its efficiency. I shall pursue the plan I have chalked out in my letters that follow this.

# LETTER II.

## ON THE GENIUS AND CHARACTER OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AS IT REGARDS OTHER NATIONS.

MY DEAR SIR, — I closed my first letter with serious matter, and I hope it has employed your thoughts. The system of peace must have a reference to the system of the war. On that ground, I must therefore again recall your mind to our original opinions, which time and events have not taught me to vary.

My ideas and my principles led me, in this contest, to encounter France, not as a state, but as a faction. The vast territorial extent of that country, its immense population, its riches of production, its riches of commerce and convention, the whole aggregate mass of what in ordinary cases constitutes the force of a state, to me were but objects of secondary consideration. They might be balanced; and they have been often more than balanced. Great as these things are, they are not what make the faction formidable. It is the faction that makes them truly dreadful. That faction is the evil spirit that possesses the body of France, — that informs it as a soul, — that stamps upon its ambition, and upon all its pursuits, a characteristic mark, which strongly distinguishes them from the same general passions and the same general views in other men and in other communities. It is that spirit which inspires

into them a new, a pernicious, a desolating activity. Constituted as France was ten years ago, it was not in that France to shake, to shatter, and to overwhelm Europe in the manner that we behold. A sure destruction impends over those infatuated princes who, in the conflict with this new and unheard-of power, proceed as if they were engaged in a war that bore a resemblance to their former contests, or that they can make peace in the spirit of their former arrangements of pacification. Here the beaten path is the very reverse of the safe road.

As to me, I was always steadily of opinion that this disorder was not in its nature intermittent. I conceived that the contest, once begun, could not be laid down again, to be resumed at our discretion, but that our first struggle with this evil would also be our last. I never thought we could make peace with the system; because it was not for the sake of an object we pursued in rivalry with each other, but with the system itself that we were at war. As I understood the matter, we were at war, not with its conduct, but with its existence, — convinced that its existence and its hostility were the same.

The faction is not local or territorial. It is a general evil. Where it least appears in action, it is still full of life. In its sleep it recruits its strength and prepares its exertion. Its spirit lies deep in the corruptions of our common nature. The social order which restrains it feeds it. It exists in every country in Europe, and among all orders of men in every country, who look up to France as to a common head. The centre is there. The circumference is the world of Europe, wherever the race of Europe may be settled. Everywhere else the faction is mili-

tant; in France it is triumphant. In France is the bank of deposit and the bank of circulation of all the pernicious principles that are forming in every state. It will be a folly scarcely deserving of pity, and too mischievous for contempt, to think of restraining it in any other country whilst it is predominant there. War, instead of being the cause of its force, has suspended its operation. It has given a reprieve, at least, to the Christian world.

The true nature of a Jacobin war, in the beginning, was by most of the Christian powers felt, acknowledged, and even in the most precise manner declared. In the joint manifesto published by the Emperor and the King of Prussia, on the 4th of August, 1792, it is expressed in the clearest terms, and on principles which could not fail, if they had adhered to them, of classing those monarchs with the first benefactors of mankind. This manifesto was published, as they themselves express it, "to lay open to the present generation, as well as to posterity, their motives, their intentions, and the *disinterestedness* of their personal views: taking up arms for the purpose of preserving social and political order amongst all civilized nations, and to secure to *each* state its religion, happiness, independence, territories, and real constitution." — "On this ground they hoped that all empires and all states would be unanimous, and, becoming the firm guardians of the happiness of mankind, that they could not fail to unite their efforts to rescue a numerous nation from its own fury, to preserve Europe from the return of barbarism, and the universe from the subversion and anarchy with which it was threatened." The whole of that noble performance ought to be read at the first meeting of

any congress which may assemble for the purpose of pacification. In that piece "these powers expressly renounce all views of personal aggrandizement," and confine themselves to objects worthy of so generous, so heroic, and so perfectly wise and politic an enterprise. It was to the principles of this confederation, and to no other, that we wished our sovereign and our country to accede, as a part of the commonwealth of Europe. To these principles, with some trifling exceptions and limitations, they did fully accede.* And all our friends who took office acceded to the ministry, (whether wisely or not,) as I always understood the matter, on the faith and on the principles of that declaration.

As long as these powers flattered themselves that the menace of force would produce the effect of force, they acted on those declarations; but when their menaces failed of success, their efforts took a new direction. It did not appear to them that virtue and heroism ought to be purchased by millions of rix-dollars. It is a dreadful truth, but it is a truth that cannot be concealed: in ability, in dexterity, in the distinctness of their views, the Jacobins are our superiors. They saw the thing right from the very beginning. Whatever were the first motives to the war among politicians, they saw that in its spirit, and for its objects, it was a *civil war;* and as such they pursued it. It is a war between the partisans of the ancient civil, moral, and political order of Europe against a sect of fanatical and ambitious atheists which means to change them all. It is not France extending a foreign empire over other nations: it is a sect aiming at universal empire, and beginning with

* See Declaration, Whitehall, Oct. 29, 1793.

the conquest of France. The leaders of that sect secured *the centre of Europe;* and that secured, they knew, that, whatever might be the event of battles and sieges, their *cause* was victorious. Whether its territory had a little more or a little less peeled from its surface, or whether an island or two was detached from its commerce, to them was of little moment. The conquest of France was a glorious acquisition. That once well laid as a basis of empire, opportunities never could be wanting to regain or to replace what had been lost, and dreadfully to avenge themselves on the faction of their adversaries.

They saw it was *a civil war.* It was their business to persuade their adversaries that it ought to be a *foreign* war. The Jacobins everywhere set up a cry against the new crusade; and they intrigued with effect in the cabinet, in the field, and in every private society in Europe. Their task was not difficult. The condition of princes, and sometimes of first ministers too, is to be pitied. The creatures of the desk and the creatures of favor had no relish for the principles of the manifestoes. They promised no governments, no regiments, no revenues from whence emoluments might arise by perquisite or by grant. In truth, the tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit. They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended only by conscience and glory. A large, liberal, and prospective view of the interests of states passes with them for romance, and the principles that recommend it for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. The calculators compute them out of their senses. The jesters and buffoons shame them out of

everything grand and elevated. Littleness in object and in means to them appears soundness and sobriety. They think there is nothing worth pursuit, but that which they can handle, which they can measure with a two-foot rule, which they can tell upon ten fingers.

Without the principles of the Jacobins, perhaps without any principles at all, they played the game of that faction. There was a beaten road before them. The powers of Europe were armed; France had always appeared dangerous; the war was easily diverted from France as a faction to France as a state. The princes were easily taught to slide back into their old, habitual course of politics. They were easily led to consider the flames that were consuming France, not as a warning to protect their own buildings, (which were without any party-wall, and linked by a contignation into the edifice of France,) but as an happy occasion for pillaging the goods, and for carrying off the materials of their neighbor's house. Their provident fears were changed into avaricious hopes. They carried on their new designs without seeming to abandon the principles of their old policy. They pretended to seek, or they flattered themselves that they sought, in the accession of new fortresses and new territories a *defensive* security. But the security wanted was against a kind of power which was not so truly dangerous in its fortresses nor in its territories as in its spirit and its principles. They aimed, or pretended to aim, at *defending* themselves against a danger from which there can be no security in any *defensive* plan. If armies and fortresses were a defence against Jacobinism, Louis the Sixteenth would this day reign a powerful monarch over an happy people.

This error obliged them, even in their offensive operations, to adopt a plan of war against the success of which there was something little short of mathematical demonstration. They refused to take any step which might strike at the heart of affairs. They seemed unwilling to wound the enemy in any vital part. They acted through the whole as if they really wished the conservation of the Jacobin power, as what might be more favorable than the lawful government to the attainment of the petty objects they looked for. They always kept on the circumference; and the wider and remoter the circle was, the more eagerly they chose it as their sphere of action in this centrifugal war. The plan they pursued in its nature demanded great length of time. In its execution, they who went the nearest way to work were obliged to cover an incredible extent of country. It left to the enemy every means of destroying this extended line of weakness. Ill success in any part was sure to defeat the effect of the whole. This is true of Austria. It is still more true of England. On this false plan, even good fortune, by further weakening the victor, put him but the further off from his object.

As long as there was any appearance of success, the spirit of aggrandizement, and consequently the spirit of mutual jealousy, seized upon all the coalesced powers. Some sought an accession of territory at the expense of France, some at the expense of each other, some at the expense of third parties; and when the vicissitude of disaster took its turn, they found common distress a treacherous bond of faith and friendship.

The greatest skill, conducting the greatest military

apparatus, has been employed; but it has been worse than uselessly employed, through the false policy of the war. The operations of the field suffered by the errors of the cabinet. If the same spirit continues, when peace is made, the peace will fix and perpetuate all the errors of the war; because it will be made upon the same false principle. What has been lost in the field, in the field may be regained. An arrangement of peace in its nature is a permanent settlement: it is the effect of counsel and deliberation, and not of fortuitous events. If built upon a basis fundamentally erroneous, it can only be retrieved by some of those unforeseen dispensations which the all-wise, but mysterious, Governor of the world sometimes interposes, to snatch nations from ruin. It would not be pious error, but mad and impious presumption, for any one to trust in an unknown order of dispensations, in defiance of the rules of prudence, which are formed upon the known march of the ordinary providence of God.

It was not of that sort of war that I was amongst the least considerable, but amongst the most zealous advisers; and it is not by the sort of peace now talked of that I wish it concluded. It would answer no great purpose to enter into the particular errors of the war. The whole has been but one error. It was but nominally a war of alliance. As the combined powers pursued it, there was nothing to hold an alliance together. There could be no tie of *honor* in a society for pillage. There could be no tie of a common *interest*, where the object did not offer such a division amongst the parties as could well give them a warm concern in the gains of each other, or could, indeed, form such a body of equiva-

lents as might make one of them willing to abandon a separate object of his ambition for the gratification of any other member of the alliance. The partition of Poland offered an object of spoil in which the parties *might* agree. They were circumjacent, and each might take a portion convenient to his own territory. They might dispute about the value of their several shares, but the contiguity to each of the demandants always furnished the means of an adjustment. Though hereafter the world will have cause to rue this iniquitous measure, and they most who were most concerned in it, for the moment there was wherewithal in the object to preserve peace amongst confederates in wrong. But the spoil of France did not afford the same facilities for accommodation. What might satisfy the House of Austria in a Flemish frontier afforded no equivalent to tempt the cupidity of the King of Prussia. What might be desired by Great Britain in the West Indies must be coldly and remotely, if at all, felt as an interest at Vienna, and it would be felt as something worse than a negative interest at Madrid. Austria, long possessed with unwise and dangerous designs on Italy, could not be very much in earnest about the conservation of the old patrimony of the House of Savoy; and Sardinia, who owed to an Italian force all her means of shutting out France from Italy, of which she has been supposed to hold the key, would not purchase the means of strength upon one side by yielding it on the other: she would not readily give the possession of Novara for the hope of Savoy. No Continental power was willing to lose any of its Continental objects for the increase of the naval power of Great Britain; and Great Britain would not give

up any of the objects she sought for, as the means of an increase to her naval power, to further their aggrandizement.

The moment this war came to be considered as a war merely of profit, the actual circumstances are such that it never could become really a war of alliance. Nor can the peace be a peace of alliance, until things are put upon their right bottom.

I don't find it denied, that, when a treaty is entered into for peace, a demand will be made on the Regicides to surrender a great part of their conquests on the Continent. Will they, in the present state of the war, make that surrender without an equivalent? This Continental cession must of course be made in favor of that party in the alliance that has suffered losses. That party has nothing to furnish towards an equivalent. What equivalent, for instance, has Holland to offer, who has lost her all? What equivalent can come from the Emperor, every part of whose territories contiguous to France is already within the pale of the Regicide dominion? What equivalent has Sardinia to offer for Savoy, and for Nice, — I may say, for her whole being? What has she taken from the faction of France? She has lost very near her all, and she has gained nothing. What equivalent has Spain to give? Alas! she has already paid for her own ransom the fund of equivalent, — and a dreadful equivalent it is, to England and to herself. But I put Spain out of the question: she is a province of the Jacobin empire, and she must make peace or war according to the orders she receives from the Directory of Assassins. In effect and substance, her crown is a fief of Regicide.

Whence, then, can the compensation be demanded?

Undoubtedly from that power which alone has made some conquests. That power is England. Will the Allies, then, give away their ancient patrimony, that England may keep islands in the West Indies? They never can protract the war in good earnest for that object; nor can they act in concert with us, in our refusal to grant anything towards their redemption. In that case we are thus situated: either we must give Europe, bound hand and foot, to France, or we must quit the West Indies without any one object, great or small, towards indemnity and security. I repeat it, without any advantage whatever: because, supposing that our conquest could comprise all that France ever possessed in the tropical America, it never can amount in any fair estimation to a fair equivalent for Holland, for the Austrian Netherlands, for the Lower Germany, — that is, for the whole ancient kingdom or circle of Burgundy, now under the yoke of Regicide, to say nothing of almost all Italy, under the same barbarous domination. If we treat in the present situation of things, we have nothing in our hands that can redeem Europe. Nor is the Emperor, as I have observed, more rich in the fund of equivalents.

If we look to our stock in the Eastern world, our most valuable and systematic acquisitions are made in that quarter. Is it from France they are made? France has but one or two contemptible factories, subsisting by the offal of the private fortunes of English individuals to support them, in any part of India. I look on the taking of the Cape of Good Hope as the securing of a post of great moment; it does honor to those who planned and to those who executed that enterprise; but I speak of it always as comparatively

good, — as good as anything can be in a scheme of war that repels us from a centre, and employs all our forces where nothing can be finally decisive. But giving, as I freely give, every possible credit to these Eastern conquests, I ask one question: — On whom are they made? It is evident, that, if we can keep our Eastern conquests, we keep them not at the expense of France, but at the expense of Holland, our *ally*, — of Holland, the immediate cause of the war, the nation whom we had undertaken to protect, and not of the Republic which it was our business to destroy. If we return the African and the Asiatic conquests, we put them into the hands of a nominal state (to that Holland is reduced) unable to retain them, and which will virtually leave them under the direction of France. If we withhold them, Holland declines still more as a state. She loses so much carrying trade, and that means of keeping up the small degree of naval power she holds: for which policy alone, and not for any commercial gain, she maintains the Cape, or any settlement beyond it. In that case, resentment, faction, and even necessity, will throw her more and more into the power of the new, mischievous Republic. But on the probable state of Holland I shall say more, when in this correspondence I come to talk over with you the state in which any sort of Jacobin peace will leave all Europe.

So far as to the East Indies.

As to the West Indies, — indeed, as to either, if we look for matter of exchange in order to ransom Europe, — it is easy to show that we have taken a terribly roundabout road. I cannot conceive, even if, for the sake of holding conquests there, we should

refuse to redeem Holland, and the Austrian Nether lands, and the hither Germany, that Spain, merely as she is Spain, (and forgetting that the Regicide ambassador governs at Madrid,) will see with perfect satisfaction Great Britain sole mistress of the isles. In truth, it appears to me, that, when we come to balance our account, we shall find in the proposed peace only the pure, simple, and unendowed charms of Jacobin amity. We shall have the satisfaction of knowing that no blood or treasure has been spared by the Allies for support of the Regicide system. We shall reflect at leisure on one great truth: that it was ten times more easy totally to destroy the system itself than, when established, it would be to reduce its power, — and that this republic, most formidable abroad, was of all things the weakest at home; that her frontier was terrible, her interior feeble; that it was matter of choice to attack her where she is invincible, and to spare her where she was ready to dissolve by her own internal disorders. We shall reflect that our plan was good neither for offence nor defence.

It would not be at all difficult to prove that an army of an hundred thousand men, horse, foot, and artillery, might have been employed against the enemy, on the very soil which he has usurped, at a far less expense than has been squandered away upon tropical adventures. In these adventures it was not an enemy we had to vanquish, but a cemetery to conquer. In carrying on the war in the West Indies, the hostile sword is merciful, the country in which we engage is the dreadful enemy. There the European conqueror finds a cruel defeat in the very fruits of his success. Every advantage is but a new demand

on England for recruits to the West Indian grave. In a West India war, the Regicides have for their troops a race of fierce barbarians, to whom the poisoned air, in which our youth inhale certain death, is salubrity and life. To them the climate is the surest and most faithful of allies.

Had we carried on the war on the side of France which looks towards the Channel or the Atlantic, we should have attacked our enemy on his weak and unarmed side. We should not have to reckon on the loss of a man who did not fall in battle. We should have an ally in the heart of the country, who to our hundred thousand would at one time have added eighty thousand men at the least, and all animated by principle, by enthusiasm, and by vengeance: motives which secured them to the cause in a very different manner from some of those allies whom we subsidized with millions. This ally, (or rather, this principal in the war,) by the confession of the Regicide himself, was more formidable to him than all his other foes united. Warring there, we should have led our arms to the capital of Wrong. Defeated, we could not fail (proper precautions taken) of a sure retreat. Stationary, and only supporting the royalists, an impenetrable barrier, an impregnable rampart, would have been formed between the enemy and his naval power. We are probably the only nation who have declined to act against an enemy when it might have been done in his own country, and who, having an armed, a powerful, and a long victorious ally in that country, declined all effectual coöperation, and suffered him to perish for want of support. On the plan of a war in France, every advantage that our allies might

obtain would be doubled in its effect. Disasters on the one side might have a fair chance of being compensated by victories on the other. Had we brought the main of our force to bear upon that quarter, all the operations of the British and Imperial crowns would have been combined. The war would have had system, correspondence, and a certain direction. But as the war has been pursued, the operations of the two crowns have not the smallest degree of mutual bearing or relation.

Had acquisitions in the West Indies been our object, on success in France, everything reasonable in those remote parts might be demanded with decorum and justice and a sure effect. Well might we call for a recompense in America for those services to which Europe owed its safety. Having abandoned this obvious policy connected with principle, we have seen the Regicide power taking the reverse course, and making real conquests in the West Indies, to which all our dear-bought advantages (if we could hold them) are mean and contemptible. The noblest island within the tropics, worth all that we possess put together, is by the vassal Spaniard delivered into her hands. The island of Hispaniola (of which we have but one poor corner, by a slippery hold) is perhaps equal to England in extent, and in fertility is far superior. The part possessed by Spain of that great island, made for the seat and centre of a tropical empire, was not improved, to be sure, as the French division had been, before it was systematically destroyed by the Cannibal Republic; but it is not only the far larger, but the far more salubrious and more fertile part.

It was delivered into the hands of the barbarians,

without, as I can find, any public reclamation on our part, not only in contravention to one of the fundamental treaties that compose the public law of Europe, but in defiance of the fundamental colonial policy of Spain herself. This part of the Treaty of Utrecht was made for great general ends, unquestionably; but whilst it provided for those general ends, it was in affirmance of that particular policy. It was not to injure, but to save Spain, by making a settlement of her estate which prohibited her to alienate to France. It is her policy not to see the balance of West Indian power overturned by France or by Great Britain. Whilst the monarchies subsisted, this unprincipled cession was what the influence of the elder branch of the House of Bourbon never dared to attempt on the younger: but cannibal terror has been more powerful than family influence. The Bourbon monarchy of Spain is united to the Republic of France by what may be truly called the ties of blood.

By this measure the balance of power in the West Indies is totally destroyed. It has followed the balance of power in Europe. It is not alone what shall be left nominally to the Assassins that is theirs. Theirs is the whole empire of Spain in America. That stroke finishes all. I should be glad to see our suppliant negotiator in the act of putting his feather to the ear of the Directory, to make it unclench the fist, and, by his tickling, to charm that rich prize out of the iron gripe of robbery and ambition! It does not require much sagacity to discern that no power wholly baffled and defeated in Europe can flatter itself with conquests in the West Indies. In that state of things it can neither keep nor hold. No! It cannot even long make war, if the grand bank and de-

posit of its force is at all in the West Indies. But here a scene opens to my view too important to pass by, perhaps too critical to touch. Is it possible that it should not present itself in all its relations to a mind habituated to consider either war or peace on a large scale or as one whole?

Unfortunately, other ideas have prevailed. A remote, an expensive, a murderous, and, in the end, an unproductive adventure, carried on upon ideas of mercantile knight-errantry, without any of the generous wildness of Quixotism, is considered as sound, solid sense; and a war in a wholesome climate, a war at our door, a war directly on the enemy, a war in the heart of his country, a war in concert with an internal ally, and in combination with the external, is regarded as folly and romance.

My dear friend, I hold it impossible that these considerations should have escaped the statesmen on both sides of the water, and on both sides of the House of Commons. How a question of peace can be discussed without having them in view I cannot imagine. If you or others see a way out of these difficulties, I am happy. I see, indeed, a fund from whence equivalents will be proposed. I see it, but I cannot just now touch it. It is a question of high moment. It opens another Iliad of woes to Europe.

Such is the time proposed for making *a common political peace* to which no one circumstance is propitious. As to the grand principle of the peace, it is left, as if by common consent, wholly out of the question.

Viewing things in this light, I have frequently sunk into a degree of despondency and dejection hardly to be described; yet out of the profoundest depths of

this despair, an impulse which I have in vain endeavored to resist has urged me to raise one feeble cry against this unfortunate coalition which is formed at home, in order to make a coalition with France, subversive of the whole ancient order of the world. No disaster of war, no calamity of season, could ever strike me with half the horror which I felt from what is introduced to us by this junction of parties under the soothing name of peace. We are apt to speak of a low and pusillanimous spirit as the ordinary cause by which dubious wars terminate in humiliating treaties. It is here the direct contrary. I am perfectly astonished at the boldness of character, at the intrepidity of mind, the firmness of nerve, in those who are able with deliberation to face the perils of Jacobin fraternity.

This fraternity is, indeed, so terrible in its nature, and in its manifest consequences, that there is no way of quieting our apprehensions about it, but by totally putting it out of sight, by substituting for it, through a sort of periphrasis, something of an ambiguous quality, and describing such a connection under the terms of "*the usual relations of peace and amity.*" By this means the proposed fraternity is hustled in the crowd of those treaties which imply no change in the public law of Europe, and which do not upon system affect the interior condition of nations. It is confounded with those conventions in which matters of dispute among sovereign powers are compromised by the taking off a duty more or less, by the surrender of a frontier town or a disputed district on the one side or the other, by pactions in which the pretensions of families are settled, (as by a conveyancer making family substitutions and successions,) with-

out any alteration in the laws, manners, religion, privileges, and customs of the cities or territories which are the subject of such arrangements.

All this body of old conventions, composing the vast and voluminous collection called the *Corps Diplomatique*, forms the code or statute law, as the methodized reasonings of the great publicists and jurists form the digest and jurisprudence, of the Christian world. In these treasures are to be found the *usual* relations of peace and amity in civilized Europe; and there the relations of ancient France were to be found amongst the rest.

The present system in France is not the ancient France. It is not the ancient France with ordinary ambition and ordinary means. It is not a new power of an old kind. It is a new power of a new species. When such a questionable shape is to be admitted for the first time into the brotherhood of Christendom, it is not a mere matter of idle curiosity to consider how far it is in its nature alliable with the rest, or whether "the relations of peace and amity" with this new state are likely to be of the same nature with the *usual* relations of the states of Europe.

The Revolution in France had the relation of France to other nations as one of its principal objects. The changes made by that Revolution were not the better to accommodate her to the old and usual relations, but to produce new ones. The Revolution was made, not to make France free, but to make her formidable, — not to make her a neighbor, but a mistress, — not to make her more observant of laws, but to put her in a condition to impose them. To make France truly formidable, it was ne-

cessary that France should be new-modelled. They who have not followed the train of the late proceedings have been led by deceitful representations (which deceit made a part in the plan) to conceive that this totally new model of a state, in which nothing escaped a change, was made with a view to its internal relations only.

In the Revolution of France, two sorts of men were principally concerned in giving a character and determination to its pursuits: the philosophers and the politicians. They took different ways, but they met in the same end.

The philosophers had one predominant object, which they pursued with a fanatical fury, — that is, the utter extirpation of religion. To that every question of empire was subordinate. They had rather domineer in a parish of atheists than rule over a Christian world. Their temporal ambition was wholly subservient to their proselytizing spirit, in which they were not exceeded by Mahomet himself.

They who have made but superficial studies in the natural history of the human mind have been taught to look on religious opinions as the only cause of enthusiastic zeal and sectarian propagation. But there is no doctrine whatever, on which men can warm, that is not capable of the very same effect. The social nature of man impels him to propagate his principles, as much as physical impulses urge him to propagate his kind. The passions give zeal and vehemence. The understanding bestows design and system. The whole man moves under the discipline of his opinions. Religion is among the most powerful causes of enthusiasm. When anything concerning it becomes an object of much meditation, it

cannot be indifferent to the mind. They who do not love religion hate it. The rebels to God perfectly abhor the Author of their being. They hate Him "with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength." He never presents Himself to their thoughts, but to menace and alarm them. They cannot strike the sun out of heaven, but they are able to raise a smouldering smoke that obscures him from their own eyes. Not being able to revenge themselves on God, they have a delight in vicariously defacing, degrading, torturing, and tearing in pieces His image in man. Let no one judge of them by what he has conceived of them, when they were not incorporated, and had no lead. They were then only passengers in a common vehicle. They were then carried along with the general motion of religion in the community, and, without being aware of it, partook of its influence. In that situation, at worst, their nature was left free to counterwork their principles. They despaired of giving any very general currency to their opinions: they considered them as a reserved privilege for the chosen few. But when the possibility of dominion, lead, and propagation presented themselves, and that the ambition which before had so often made them hypocrites might rather gain than lose by a daring avowal of their sentiments, then the nature of this infernal spirit, which has "evil for its good," appeared in its full perfection. Nothing, indeed, but the possession of some power can with any certainty discover what at the bottom is the true character of any man. Without reading the speeches of Vergniaud, Français of Nantes, Isnard, and some others of that sort, it would not be easy to conceive the passion, ran-

cor, and malice of their tongues and hearts. They worked themselves up to a perfect frenzy against religion and all its professors. They tore the reputation of the clergy to pieces by their infuriated declamations and invectives, before they lacerated their bodies by their massacres. This fanatical atheism left out, we omit the principal feature in the French Revolution, and a principal consideration with regard to the effects to be expected from a peace with it.

The other sort of men were the politicians. To them, who had little or not at all reflected on the subject, religion was in itself no object of love or hatred. They disbelieved it, and that was all. Neutral with regard to that object, they took the side which in the present state of things might best answer their purposes. They soon found that they could not do without the philosophers; and the philosophers soon made them sensible that the destruction of religion was to supply them with means of conquest, first at home, and then abroad. The philosophers were the active internal agitators, and supplied the spirit and principles: the second gave the practical direction. Sometimes the one predominated in the composition, sometimes the other. The only difference between them was in the necessity of concealing the general design for a time, and in their dealing with foreign nations: the fanatics going straight forward and openly, the politicians by the surer mode of zigzag. In the course of events, this, among other causes, produced fierce and bloody contentions between them; but at the bottom they thoroughly agreed in all the objects of ambition and irreligion, and substantially in all the means of promoting these ends.

Without question, to bring about the unexampled event of the French Revolution, the concurrence of a very great number of views and passions was necessary. In that stupendous work, no one principle by which the human mind may have its faculties at once invigorated and depraved was left unemployed; but I can speak it to a certainty, and support it by undoubted proofs, that the ruling principle of those who acted in the Revolution *as statesmen* had the exterior aggrandizement of France as their ultimate end in the most minute part of the internal changes that were made. We, who of late years have been drawn from an attention to foreign affairs by the importance of our domestic discussions, cannot easily form a conception of the general eagerness of the active and energetic part of the French nation, itself the most active and energetic of all nations, previous to its Revolution, upon that subject. I am convinced that the foreign speculators in France, under the old government, were twenty to one of the same description then or now in England; and few of that description there were who did not emulously set forward the Revolution. The whole official system, particularly in the diplomatic part, the regulars, the irregulars, down to the clerks in office, (a corps without all comparison more numerous than the same amongst us,) coöperated in it. All the intriguers in foreign politics, all the spies, all the intelligencers, actually or late in function, all the candidates for that sort of employment, acted solely upon that principle.

On that system of aggrandizement there was but one mind: but two violent factions arose about the means. The first wished France, diverted from the politics of the Continent, to attend solely to her ma-

rine, to feed it by an increase of commerce, and thereby to overpower England on her own element. They contended, that, if England were disabled, the powers on the Continent would fall into their proper subordination; that it was England which deranged the whole Continental system of Europe. The others, who were by far the more numerous, though not the most outwardly prevalent at court, considered this plan for France as contrary to her genius, her situation, and her natural means. They agreed as to the ultimate object, the reduction of the British power, and, if possible, its naval power; but they considered an ascendancy on the Continent as a necessary preliminary to that undertaking. They argued, that the proceedings of England herself had proved the soundness of this policy: that her greatest and ablest statesmen had not considered the support of a Continental balance against France as a deviation from the principle of her naval power, but as one of the most effectual modes of carrying it into effect; that such had been her policy ever since the Revolution, during which period the naval strength of Great Britain had gone on increasing in the direct ratio of her interference in the politics of the Continent. With much stronger reason ought the politics of France to take the same direction, — as well for pursuing objects which her situation would dictate to her, though England had no existence, as for counteracting the politics of that nation: to France Continental politics are primary; they looked on them only of secondary consideration to England, and, however necessary, but as means necessary to an end.

What is truly astonishing, the partisans of those two opposite systems were at once prevalent, and at

once employed, and in the very same transactions, the one ostensibly, the other secretly, during the latter part of the reign of Louis the Fifteenth. Nor was there one court in which an ambassador resided on the part of the ministers, in which another, as a spy on him, did not also reside on the part of the king: they who pursued the scheme for keeping peace on the Continent, and particularly with Austria, acting officially and publicly; the other faction counteracting and opposing them. These private agents were continually going from their function to the Bastile, and from the Bastile to employment and favor again. An inextricable cabal was formed, some of persons of rank, others of subordinates. But by this means the corps of politicians was augmented in number, and the whole formed a body of active, adventuring, ambitious, discontented people, despising the regular ministry, despising the courts at which they were employed, despising the court which employed them.

The unfortunate Louis the Sixteenth * was not the

* It may be right to do justice to Louis the Sixteenth. He did what he could to destroy the double diplomacy of France. He had all the secret correspondence burnt, except one piece, which was called *Conjectures raisonnées sur la Situation actuelle de la France dans le Système Politique de l'Europe:* a work executed by M. Favier, under the direction of Count Broglie. A single copy of this was said to have been found in the cabinet of Louis the Sixteenth. It was published with some subsequent state-papers of Vergennes, Turgot, and others, as "a new benefit of the Revolution," and the advertisement to the publication ends with the following words: "*Il sera facile de se convaincre,* QU'Y COMPRIS MÊME LA RÉVOLUTION, *en grande partie,* ON TROUVE DANS CES *MÉMOIRES* ET CES *CONJECTURES* LE GERME DE TOUT CE QUI ARRIVE AUJOURD'HUI, *et qu'on ne peut, sans les avoir lus, être bien au fait des intérêts, et même des vues actuelles des diverses puissances de l' Europe.*" The book is entitled *Politique de tous les Cabinets de l'Europe pendant les Règnes de Louis XV. et de Louis XVI.* It is altogether very curious, and worth reading.

first cause of the evil by which he suffered. He came to it, as to a sort of inheritance, by the false politics of his immediate predecessor. This system of dark and perplexed intrigue had come to its perfection before he came to the throne; and even then the Revolution strongly operated in all its causes.

There was no point on which the discontented diplomatic politicians so bitterly arraigned their cabinet as for the decay of French influence in all others. From quarrelling with the court, they began to complain of monarchy itself, as a system of government too variable for any regular plan of national aggrandizement. They observed that in that sort of regimen too much depended on the personal character of the prince: that the vicissitudes produced by the succession of princes of a different character, and even the vicissitudes produced in the same man, by the different views and inclinations belonging to youth, manhood, and age, disturbed and distracted the policy of a country made by Nature for extensive empire, or, what was still more to their taste, for that sort of general overruling influence which prepared empire or supplied the place of it. They had continually in their hands the observations of Machiavel on Livy. They had Montesquieu's *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains* as a manual; and they compared, with mortification, the systematic proceedings of a Roman Senate with the fluctuations of a monarchy. They observed the very small additions of territory which all the power of France, actuated by all the ambition of France, had acquired in two centuries. The Romans had frequently acquired more in a single year. They severely and in every part of it criticized the reign of Louis the Fourteenth,

whose irregular and desultory ambition had more provoked than endangered Europe. Indeed, they who will be at the pains of seriously considering the history of that period will see that those French politicians had some reason. They who will not take the trouble of reviewing it through all its wars and all its negotiations will consult the short, but judicious, criticism of the Marquis de Montalembert on that subject. It may be read separately from his ingenious system of fortification and military defence, on the practical merit of which I am unable to form a judgment.

The diplomatic politicians of whom I speak, and who formed by far the majority in that class, made disadvantageous comparisons even between their more legal and formalizing monarchy and the monarchies of other states, as a system of power and influence. They observed that France not only lost ground herself, but, through the languor and unsteadiness of her pursuits, and from her aiming through commerce at naval force which she never could attain without losing more on one side than she could gain on the other, three great powers, each of them (as military states) capable of balancing her, had grown up on the Continent. Russia and Prussia had been created almost within memory; and Austria, though not a new power, and even curtailed in territory, was, by the very collision in which she lost that territory, greatly improved in her military discipline and force. During the reign of Maria Theresa, the interior economy of the country was made more to correspond with the support of great armies than formerly it had been. As to Prussia, a merely military power, they observed that one war had enriched her

with as considerable a conquest as France had acquired in centuries. Russia had broken the Turkish power, by which Austria might be, as formerly she had been, balanced in favor of France. They felt it with pain, that the two Northern powers of Sweden and Denmark were in general under the sway of Russia, — or that, at best, France kept up a very doubtful conflict, with many fluctuations of fortune, and at an enormous expense, in Sweden. In Holland the French party seemed, if not extinguished, at least utterly obscured, and kept under by a Stadtholder, leaning for support sometimes on Great Britain, sometimes on Prussia, sometimes on both, never on France. Even the spreading of the Bourbon family had become merely a family accommodation, and had little effect on the national politics. This alliance, they said, extinguished Spain by destroying all its energy, without adding anything to the real power of France in the accession of the forces of its great rival. In Italy the same family accommodation, the same national insignificance, were equally visible. What cure for the radical weakness of the French monarchy, to which all the means which wit could devise, or Nature and fortune could bestow, towards universal empire, was not of force to give life or vigor or consistency, but in a republic? Out the word came: and it never went back.

Whether they reasoned right or wrong, or that there was some mixture of right and wrong in their reasoning, I am sure that in this manner they felt and reasoned. The different effects of a great military and ambitious republic and of a monarchy of the same description were constantly in their mouths. The principle was ready to operate, when opportuni-

ties should offer, which few of them, indeed, foresaw in the extent in which they were afterwards presented; but these opportunities, in some degree or other, they all ardently wished for.

When I was in Paris in 1773, the treaty of 1756 between Austria and France was deplored as a national calamity; because it united France in friendship with a power at whose expense alone they could hope any Continental aggrandizement. When the first partition of Poland was made, in which France had no share, and which had farther aggrandized every one of the three powers of which they were most jealous, I found them in a perfect frenzy of rage and indignation: not that they were hurt at the shocking and uncolored violence and injustice of that partition, but at the debility, improvidence, and want of activity in their government, in not preventing it as a means of aggrandizement to their rivals, or in not contriving, by exchanges of some kind or other, to obtain their share of advantage from that robbery.

In that or nearly in that state of things and of opinions came the Austrian match, which promised to draw the knot, as afterwards in effect it did, still more closely between the old rival houses. This added exceedingly to their hatred and contempt of their monarchy. It was for this reason that the late glorious queen, who on all accounts was formed to produce general love and admiration, and whose life was as mild and beneficent as her death was beyond example great and heroic, became so very soon and so very much the object of an implacable rancor, never to be extinguished but in her blood. When I wrote my letter in answer to M. de Menonville, in

the beginning of January, 1791, I had good reason for thinking that this description of revolutionists did not so early nor so steadily point their murderous designs at the martyr king as at the royal heroine. It was accident, and the momentary depression of that part of the faction, that gave to the husband the happy priority in death.

From this their restless desire of an overruling influence, they bent a very great part of their designs and efforts to revive the old French party, which was a democratic party, in Holland, and to make a revolution there. They were happy at the troubles which the singular imprudence of Joseph the Second had stirred up in the Austrian Netherlands. They rejoiced, when they saw him irritate his subjects, profess philosophy, send away the Dutch garrisons, and dismantle his fortifications. As to Holland, they never forgave either the king or the ministry for suffering that object, which they justly looked on as principal in their design of reducing the power of England, to escape out of their hands. This was the true secret of the commercial treaty, made, on their part, against all the old rules and principles of commerce, with a view of diverting the English nation, by a pursuit of immediate profit, from an attention to the progress of France in its designs upon that republic. The system of the economists, which led to the general opening of commerce, facilitated that treaty, but did not produce it. They were in despair, when they found, that, by the vigor of Mr. Pitt, supported in this point by Mr. Fox and the opposition, the object to which they had sacrificed their manufactures was lost to their ambition.

This eager desire of raising France from the condition into which she had fallen, as they conceived, from her monarchical imbecility, had been the main spring of their precedent interference in that unhappy American quarrel, the bad effects of which to this nation have not as yet fully disclosed themselves. These sentiments had been long lurking in their breasts, though their views were only discovered now and then in heat and as by escapes, but on this occasion they exploded suddenly. They were professed with ostentation, and propagated with zeal. These sentiments were not produced, as some think, by their American alliance. The American alliance was produced by their republican principles and republican policy. This new relation undoubtedly did much. The discourses and cabals that it produced, the intercourse that it established, and, above all, the example, which made it seem practicable to establish a republic in a great extent of country, finished the work, and gave to that part of the revolutionary faction a degree of strength which required other energies than the late king possessed to resist or even to restrain. It spread everywhere: but it was nowhere more prevalent than in the heart of the court. The palace of Versailles, by its language, seemed a forum of democracy. To have pointed out to most of those politicians, from their dispositions and movements, what has since happened, the fall of their own monarchy, of their own laws, of their own religion, would have been to furnish a motive the more for pushing forward a system on which they considered all these things as incumbrances. Such in truth they were. And we have seen them succeed, not only in the destruction of their monarchy, but in all the

objects of ambition that they proposed from that destruction.

When I contemplate the scheme on which France is formed, and when I compare it with these systems with which it is and ever must be in conflict, those things which seem as defects in her polity are the very things which make me tremble. The states of the Christian world have grown up to their present magnitude in a great length of time and by a great variety of accidents. They have been improved to what we see them with greater or less degrees of felicity and skill. Not one of them has been formed upon a regular plan or with any unity of design. As their constitutions are not systematical, they have not been directed to any *peculiar* end, eminently distinguished, and superseding every other. The objects which they embrace are of the greatest possible variety, and have become in a manner infinite. In all these old countries, the state has been made to the people, and not the people conformed to the state. Every state has pursued not only every sort of social advantage, but it has cultivated the welfare of every individual. His wants, his wishes, even his tastes, have been consulted. This comprehensive scheme virtually produced a degree of personal liberty in forms the most adverse to it. That liberty was found, under monarchies styled absolute, in a degree unknown to the ancient commonwealths. From hence the powers of all our modern states meet, in all their movements, with some obstruction. It is therefore no wonder, that when these states are to be considered as machines to operate for some one great end, that this dissipated and balanced force is not easily concentred, or made to bear with the whole force of the nation upon one point.

The British state is, without question, that which pursues the greatest variety of ends, and is the least disposed to sacrifice any one of them to another or to the whole. It aims at taking in the entire circle of human desires, and securing for them their fair enjoyment. Our legislature has been ever closely connected, in its most efficient part, with individual feeling and individual interest. Personal liberty, the most lively of these feelings and the most important of these interests, which in other European countries has rather arisen from the system of manners and the habitudes of life than from the laws of the state, (in which it flourished more from neglect than attention,) in England has been a direct object of government.

On this principle, England would be the weakest power in the whole system. Fortunately, however, the great riches of this kingdom, arising from a variety of causes, and the disposition of the people, which is as great to spend as to accumulate, has easily afforded a disposable surplus that gives a mighty momentum to the state. This difficulty, with these advantages to overcome it, has called forth the talents of the English financiers, who, by the surplus of industry poured out by prodigality, have outdone everything which has been accomplished in other nations. The present minister has outdone his predecessors, and, as a minister of revenue, is far above my power of praise. But still there are cases in which England feels more than several others (though they all feel) the perplexity of an immense body of balanced advantages and of individual demands, and of some irregularity in the whole mass.

France differs essentially from all those governments which are formed without system, which exist by habit, and which are confused with the multitude and with the complexity of their pursuits. What now stands as government in France is struck out at a heat. The design is wicked, immoral, impious, oppressive: but it is spirited and daring; it is systematic; it is simple in its principle; it has unity and consistency in perfection. In that country, entirely to cut off a branch of commerce, to extinguish a manufacture, to destroy the circulation of money, to violate credit, to suspend the course of agriculture, even to burn a city or to lay waste a province of their own, does not cost them a moment's anxiety. To them the will, the wish, the want, the liberty, the toil, the blood of individuals, is as nothing. Individuality is left out of their scheme of government. The state is all in all. Everything is referred to the production of force; afterwards, everything is trusted to the use of it. It is military in its principle, in its maxims, in its spirit, and in all its movements. The state has dominion and conquest for its sole objects, — dominion over minds by proselytism, over bodies by arms.

Thus constituted, with an immense body of natural means, which are lessened in their amount only to be increased in their effect, France has, since the accomplishment of the Revolution, a complete unity in its direction. It has destroyed every resource of the state which depends upon opinion and the good-will of individuals. The riches of convention disappear. The advantages of Nature in some measure remain; even these, I admit, are astonishingly lessened; the command over what remains is complete and ab-

solute. We go about asking when assignats will expire, and we laugh at the last price of them. But what signifies the fate of those tickets of despotism? The despotism will find despotic means of supply. They have found the short cut to the productions of Nature, while others, in pursuit of them, are obliged to wind through the labyrinth of a very intricate state of society. They seize upon the fruit of the labor; they seize upon the laborer himself. Were France but half of what it is in population, in compactness, in applicability of its force, situated as it is, and being what it is, it would be too strong for most of the states of Europe, constituted as they are, and proceeding as they proceed. Would it be wise to estimate what the world of Europe, as well as the world of Asia, had to dread from Genghiz Khân, upon a contemplation of the resources of the cold and barren spot in the remotest Tartary from whence first issued that scourge of the human race? Ought we to judge from the excise and stamp duties of the rocks, or from the paper circulation of the sands of Arabia, the power by which Mahomet and his tribes laid hold at once on the two most powerful empires of the world, beat one of them totally to the ground, broke to pieces the other, and, in not much longer space of time than I have lived, overturned governments, laws, manners, religion, and extended an empire from the Indus to the Pyrenees?

Material resources never have supplied, nor ever can supply, the want of unity in design and constancy in pursuit. But unity in design and perseverance and boldness in pursuit have never wanted resources, and never will. We have not considered as we ought the dreadful energy of a state in which

the property has nothing to do with the government. Reflect, my dear Sir, reflect again and again, on a government in which the property is in complete subjection, and where nothing rules but the mind of desperate men. The condition of a commonwealth not governed by its property was a combination of things which the learned and ingenious speculator, Harrington, who has tossed about society into all forms, never could imagine to be possible. We have seen it; the world has felt it; and if the world will shut their eyes to this state of things, they will feel it more. The rulers there have found their resources in crimes. The discovery is dreadful, the mine exhaustless. They have everything to gain, and they have nothing to lose. They have a boundless inheritance in hope, and there is no medium for them betwixt the highest elevation and death with infamy. Never can they, who, from the miserable servitude of the desk, have been raised to empire, again submit to the bondage of a starving bureau, or the profit of copying music, or writing *plaidoyers* by the sheet. It has made me often smile in bitterness, when I have heard talk of an indemnity to such men, provided they returned to their allegiance.

From all this what is my inference? It is, that this new system of robbery in France cannot be rendered safe by any art; that it *must* be destroyed, or that it will destroy all Europe; that to destroy that enemy, by some means or other, the force opposed to it should be made to bear some analogy and resemblance to the force and spirit which that system exerts; that war ought to be made against it in its vulnerable parts. These are my inferences. In one word, with this republic nothing independent can

coexist. The errors of Louis the Sixteenth were more pardonable to prudence than any of those of the same kind into which the allied courts may fall. They have the benefit of his dreadful example.

The unhappy Louis the Sixteenth was a man of the best intentions that probably ever reigned. He was by no means deficient in talents. He had a most laudable desire to supply by general reading, and even by the acquisition of elemental knowledge, an education in all points originally defective; but nobody told him (and it was no wonder he should not himself divine it) that the world of which he read and the world in which he lived were no longer the same. Desirous of doing everything for the best, fearful of cabal, distrusting his own judgment, he sought his ministers of all kinds upon public testimony. But as courts are the field for caballers, the public is the theatre for mountebanks and impostors. The cure for both those evils is in the discernment of the prince. But an accurate and penetrating discernment is what in a young prince could not be looked for.

His conduct in its principle was not unwise; but, like most other of his well-meant designs, it failed in his hands. It failed partly from mere ill fortune, to which speculators are rarely pleased to assign that very large share to which she is justly entitled in all human affairs. The failure, perhaps, in part, was owing to his suffering his system to be vitiated and disturbed by those intrigues which it is, humanly speaking, impossible wholly to prevent in courts, or indeed under any form of government. However, with these aberrations, he gave himself over to a succession of the statesmen of public opinion. In

other things he thought that he might be a king on the terms of his predecessors. He was conscious of the purity of his heart and the general good tendency of his government. He flattered himself, as most men in his situation will, that he might consult his ease without danger to his safety. It is not at all wonderful that both he and his ministers, giving way abundantly in other respects to innovation, should take up in policy with the tradition of their monarchy. Under his ancestors, the monarchy had subsisted, and even been strengthened, by the generation or support of republics. First, the Swiss republics grew under the guardianship of the French monarchy. The Dutch republics were hatched and cherished under the same incubation. Afterwards, a republican constitution was, under the influence of France, established in the Empire, against the pretensions of its chief. Even whilst the monarchy of France, by a series of wars and negotiations, and lastly by the Treaties of Westphalia, had obtained the establishment of the Protestants in Germany as a law of the Empire, the same monarchy under Louis the Thirteenth had force enough to destroy the republican system of the Protestants at home.

Louis the Sixteenth was a diligent reader of history. But the very lamp of prudence blinded him. The guide of human life led him astray. A silent revolution in the moral world preceded the political, and prepared it. It became of more importance than ever what examples were given, and what measures were adopted. Their causes no longer lurked in the recesses of cabinets or in the private conspiracies of the factious. They were no longer to be controlled by the force and influence of the grandees, who for-

merly had been able to stir up troubles by their discontents and to quiet them by their corruption. The chain of subordination, even in cabal and sedition, was broken in its most important links. It was no longer the great and the populace. Other interests were formed, other dependencies, other connections, other communications. The middle classes had swelled far beyond their former proportion. Like whatever is the most effectively rich and great in society, these classes became the seat of all the active politics, and the preponderating weight to decide on them. There were all the energies by which fortune is acquired; there the consequence of their success. There were all the talents which assert their pretensions, and are impatient of the place which settled society prescribes to them. These descriptions had got between the great and the populace; and the influence on the lower classes was with them. The spirit of ambition had taken possession of this class as violently as ever it had done of any other. They felt the importance of this situation. The correspondence of the moneyed and the mercantile world, the literary intercourse of academies, but above all, the press, of which they had in a manner entire possession, made a kind of electric communication everywhere. The press, in reality, has made every government, in its spirit, almost democratic. Without the great, the first movements in this revolution could not, perhaps, have been given. But the spirit of ambition, now for the first time connected with the spirit of speculation, was not to be restrained at will. There was no longer any means of arresting a principle in its course. When Louis the Sixteenth, under the influence of the enemies to monarchy, meant to found

but one republic, he set up two; when he meant to take away half the crown of his neighbor, he lost the whole of his own. Louis the Sixteenth could not with impunity countenance a new republic. Yet between his throne and that dangerous lodgment for an enemy, which he had erected, he had the whole Atlantic for a ditch. He had for an outwork the English nation itself, friendly to liberty, adverse to that mode of it. He was surrounded by a rampart of monarchies, most of them allied to him, and generally under his influence. Yet even thus secured, a republic erected under his auspices, and dependent on his power, became fatal to his throne. The very money which he had lent to support this republic, by a good faith which to him operated as perfidy, was punctually paid to his enemies, and became a resource in the hands of his assassins.

With this example before their eyes, do any ministers in England, do any ministers in Austria, really flatter themselves that they can erect, not on the remote shores of the Atlantic, but in their view, in their vicinity, in absolute contact with one of them, not a commercial, but a martial republic, — a republic not of simple husbandmen or fishermen, but of intriguers, and of warriors, — a republic of a character the most restless, the most enterprising, the most impious, the most fierce and bloody, the most hypocritical and perfidious, the most bold and daring, that ever has been seen, or indeed that can be conceived to exist, without bringing on their own certain ruin?

Such is the republic to which we are going to give a place in civilized fellowship, — the republic which, with joint consent, we are going to establish in the

centre of Europe, in a post that overlooks and commands every other state, and which eminently confronts and menaces this kingdom.

You cannot fail to observe that I speak as if the allied powers were actually consenting, and not compelled by events, to the establishment of this faction in France. The words have not escaped me. You will hereafter naturally expect that I should make them good. But whether in adopting this measure we are madly active or weakly passive or pusillanimously panic-struck, the effects will be the same. You may call this faction, which has eradicated the monarchy, expelled the proprietary, persecuted religion, and trampled upon law,*—you may call this France, if you please; but of the ancient France nothing remains but its central geography, its iron frontier, its spirit of ambition, its audacity of enterprise, its perplexing intrigue. These, and these alone, remain: and they remain heightened in their principle and augmented in their means. All the former correctives, whether of virtue or of weakness, which existed in the old monarchy, are gone. No single new corrective is to be found in the whole body of the new institutions. How should such a thing be found there, when everything has been chosen with care and selection to forward all those ambitious designs and dispositions, not to control them? The whole is a body of ways and means for the supply of dominion, without one heterogeneous particle in it.

Here I suffer you to breathe, and leave to your meditation what has occurred to me on the *genius and character* of the French Revolution. From hav-

* See our Declaration.

ing this before us, we may be better able to determine on the first question I proposed, — that is, How far nations called foreign are likely to be affected with the system established within that territory. I intended to proceed next on the question of her facilities, *from the internal state of other nations, and particularly of this*, for obtaining her ends; but I ought to be aware that my notions are controverted. I mean, therefore, in my next letter, to take notice of what in that way has been recommended to me as the most deserving of notice. In the examination of those pieces, I shall have occasion to discuss some others of the topics to which I have called your attention. You know that the letters which I now send to the press, as well as a part of what is to follow, have been in their substance long since written. A circumstance which your partiality alone could make of importance to you, but which to the public is of no importance at all, retarded their appearance. The late events which press upon us obliged me to make some additions, but no substantial change in the matter.

This discussion, my friend, will be long. But the matter is serious; and if ever the fate of the world could be truly said to depend on a particular measure, it is upon this peace. For the present, farewell.

# LETTER III.

ON THE RUPTURE OF THE NEGOTIATION; THE TERMS OF PEACE PROPOSED; AND THE RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY FOR THE CONTINUANCE OF THE WAR.

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for the bundle of state-papers which I received yesterday. I have travelled through the negotiation,—and a sad, foundrous road it is. There is a sort of standing jest against my countrymen,—that one of them on his journey having found a piece of pleasant road, he proposed to his companion to go over it again. This proposal, with regard to the worthy traveller's final destination, was certainly a blunder. It was no blunder as to his immediate satisfaction; for the way was pleasant. In the irksome journey of the Regicide negotiations it is otherwise: our "paths are not paths of pleasantness, nor our ways the ways to peace." All our mistakes, (if such they are,) like those of our Hibernian traveller, are mistakes of repetition; and they will be full as far from bringing us to our place of rest as his well-considered project was from forwarding him to his inn. Yet I see we persevere. Fatigued with our former course, too listless to explore a new one, kept in action by inertness, moving only because we have been in motion, with a sort of plodding perseverance we resolve to measure back again the very same joyless, hopeless,

and inglorious track. Backward and forward, — oscillation, not progression, — much going in a scanty space, — the travels of a postilion, miles enough to circle the globe in one short stage, — we have been, and we are yet to be, jolted and rattled over the loose, misplaced stones and the treacherous hollows of this rough, ill-kept, broken-up, treacherous French causeway!

The Declaration which brings up the rear of the papers laid before Parliament contains a review and a reasoned summary of all our attempts and all our failures, — a concise, but correct narrative of the painful steps taken to bring on the essay of a treaty at Paris, — a clear exposure of all the rebuffs we received in the progress of that experiment, — an honest confession of our departure from all the rules and all the principles of political negotiation, and of common prudence in the conduct of it, — and to crown the whole, a fair account of the atrocious manner in which the Regicide enemies had broken up what had been so inauspiciously begun and so feebly carried on, by finally, and with all scorn, driving our suppliant ambassador out of the limits of their usurpation.

Even after all that I have lately seen, I was a little surprised at this exposure. A minute display of hopes formed without foundation and of labors pursued without fruit is a thing not very flattering to self-estimation. But truth has its rights, and it will assert them. The Declaration, after doing all this with a mortifying candor, concludes the whole recapitulation with an engagement still more extraordinary than all the unusual matter it contains. It says that "His Majesty, who had entered into the negotiation with *good faith*, who had suffered *no* im-

pediment to prevent his prosecuting it with *earnestness and sincerity*, has now *only to lament* its abrupt termination, and to renew *in the face of all Europe the solemn declaration*, that, whenever his enemies shall be *disposed* to enter on the work of general pacification in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object."

If the disgusting detail of the accumulated insults we have received, in what we have very properly called our "solicitation" to a gang of felons and murderers, had been produced as a proof of the utter inefficacy of that mode of proceeding with that description of persons, I should have nothing at all to object to it. It might furnish matter conclusive in argument and instructive in policy; but, with all due submission to high authority, and with all decent deference to superior lights, it does not seem quite clear to a discernment no better than mine that the premises in that piece conduct irresistibly to the conclusion. A labored display of the ill consequences which have attended an uniform course of submission to every mode of contumelious insult, with which the despotism of a proud, capricious, insulting, and implacable foe has chosen to buffet our patience, does not appear to my poor thoughts to be properly brought forth as a preliminary to justify a resolution of persevering in the very same kind of conduct, towards the very same sort of person, and on the very same principles. We state our experience, and then we come to the manly resolution of acting in contradiction to it. All that has passed at Paris, to the moment of our being shamefully hissed off that stage, has been nothing but a more solemn representation on the theatre of

the nation of what had been before in rehearsal at Basle. As it is not only confessed by us, but made a matter of charge on the enemy, that he had given us no encouragement to believe there was a change in his disposition or in his policy at any time subsequent to the period of his rejecting our first overtures, there seems to have been no assignable motive for sending Lord Malmesbury to Paris, except to expose his humbled country to the worst indignities, and the first of the kind, as the Declaration very truly observes, that have been known in the world of negotiation.

An honest neighbor of mine is not altogether unhappy in the application of an old common story to a present occasion. It may be said of my friend, what Horace says of a neighbor of his, "*Garrit aniles ex re fabellas.*" Conversing on this strange subject, he told me a current story of a simple English country squire, who was persuaded by certain *dilettanti* of his acquaintance to see the world, and to become knowing in men and manners. Among other celebrated places, it was recommended to him to visit Constantinople. He took their advice. After various adventures, not to our purpose to dwell upon, he happily arrived at that famous city. As soon as he had a little reposed himself from his fatigue, he took a walk into the streets; but he had not gone far, before "a malignant and a turbaned Turk" had his choler roused by the careless and assured air with which this infidel strutted about in the metropolis of true believers. In this temper he lost no time in doing to our traveller the honors of the place. The Turk crossed over the way, and with perfect good-will gave him two or three lusty kicks on the seat of honor. To resent or to return the compliment in Turkey was

quite out of the question. Our traveller, since he could not otherwise acknowledge this kind of favor, received it with the best grace in the world: he made one of his most ceremonious bows, and begged the kicking Mussulman "to accept his perfect assurances of high consideration." Our countryman was too wise to imitate Othello in the use of the dagger. He thought it better, as better it was, to assuage his bruised dignity with half a yard square of balmy diplomatic diachylon. In the disasters of their friends, people are seldom wanting in a laudable patience. When they are such as do not threaten to end fatally, they become even matter of pleasantry. The English fellow-travellers of our sufferer, finding him a little out of spirits, entreated him not to take so slight a business so very seriously. They told him it was the custom of the country; that every country had its customs; that the Turkish manners were a little rough, but that in the main the Turks were a good-natured people; that what would have been a deadly affront anywhere else was only a little freedom there: in short, they told him to think no more of the matter, and to try his fortune in another promenade. But the squire, though a little clownish, had some home-bred sense. "What! have I come, at all this expense and trouble, all the way to Constantinople only to be kicked? Without going beyond my own stable, my groom, for half a crown, would have kicked me to my heart's content. I don't mean to stay in Constantinople eight-and-forty hours, nor ever to return to this rough, good-natured people, that have their own customs."

In my opinion the squire was in the right. He was satisfied with his first ramble and his first injuries.

But reason of state and common sense are two things. If it were not for this difference, it might not appear of absolute necessity, after having received a certain quantity of buffetings by advance, that we should send a peer of the realm to the scum of the earth to collect the debt to the last farthing, and to receive, with infinite aggravation, the same scorns which had been paid to our supplication through a commoner: but it was proper, I suppose, that the whole of our country, in all its orders, should have a share of the indignity, and, as in reason, that the higher orders should touch the larger proportion.

This business was not ended because our dignity was wounded, or because our patience was worn out with contumely and scorn. We had not disgorged one particle of the nauseous doses with which we were so liberally crammed by the mountebanks of Paris in order to drug and diet us into perfect tameness. No, — we waited till the morbid strength of our *boulimia* for their physic had exhausted the well-stored dispensary of their empiricism. It is impossible to guess at the term to which our forbearance would have extended. The Regicides were more fatigued with giving blows than the callous cheek of British diplomacy was hurt in receiving them. They had no way left for getting rid of this mendicant perseverance, but by sending for the beadle, and forcibly driving our embassy "of shreds and patches," with all its mumping cant, from the inhospitable door of Cannibal Castle, —

> "Where the gaunt mastiff, growling at the gate,
> Affrights the beggar whom he longs to eat."

I think we might have found, before the rude hand of insolent office was on our shoulder, and the staff

of usurped authority brandished over our heads, that contempt of the suppliant is not the best forwarder of a suit, — that national disgrace is not the high-road to security, much less to power and greatness. Patience, indeed, strongly indicates the love of peace; but mere love does not always lead to enjoyment. It is the power of winning that palm which insures our wearing it. Virtues have their place; and out of their place they hardly deserve the name, — they pass into the neighboring vice. The patience of fortitude and the endurance of pusillanimity are things very different, as in their principle, so in their effects.

In truth, this Declaration, containing a narrative of the first transaction of the kind (and I hope it will be the last) in the intercourse of nations, as a composition, is ably drawn. It does credit to our official style. The report of the speech of the minister in a great assembly, which I have read, is a comment upon the Declaration. Without inquiry how far that report is exact, (inferior I believe it may be to what it would represent,) yet still it reads as a most eloquent and finished performance. Hardly one galling circumstance of the indignities offered by the Directory of Regicide to the supplications made to that junto in his Majesty's name has been spared. Every one of the aggravations attendant on these acts of outrage is, with wonderful perspicuity and order, brought forward in its place, and in the manner most fitted to produce its effect. They are turned to every point of view in which they can be seen to the best advantage. All the parts are so arranged as to point out their relation, and to furnish a true idea of the spirit of the whole transaction.

This speech may stand for a model. Never, for

the triumphal decoration of any theatre, not for the decoration of those of Athens and Rome, or even of this theatre of Paris, from the embroideries of Babylon or from the loom of the Gobelins, has there been sent any historic tissue so truly drawn, so closely and so finely wrought, or in which the forms are brought out in the rich purple of such glowing and blushing colors. It puts me in mind of the piece of tapestry with which Virgil proposed to adorn the theatre he was to erect to Augustus upon the banks of the Mincio, who now hides his head in his reeds, and leads his slow and melancholy windings through banks wasted by the barbarians of Gaul. He supposes that the artifice is such, that the figures of the conquered nations in his tapestry are made to play their part, and are confounded in the machine, —

utque
Purpurea intexti tollant aulæa Britanni;

or, as Dryden translates it, somewhat paraphrastically, but not less in the spirit of the prophet than of the poet, —

"Where the proud theatres disclose the scene,
Which interwoven Britons seem to raise,
And show the triumph which their shame displays."

It is something wonderful, that the sagacity shown in the Declaration and the speech (and, so far as it goes, greater was never shown) should have failed to discover to the writer and to the speaker the inseparable relation between the parties to this transaction, and that nothing can be said to display the imperious arrogance of a base enemy which does not describe with equal force and equal truth the contemptible figure of an abject embassy to that imperious power.

It is no less striking, that the same obvious re-

flection should not occur to those gentlemen who conducted the opposition to government. But their thoughts were turned another way. They seem to have been so entirely occupied with the defence of the French Directory, so very eager in finding recriminatory precedents to justify every act of its intolerable insolence, so animated in their accusations of ministry for not having at the very outset made concessions proportioned to the dignity of the great victorious power we had offended, that everything concerning the sacrifice in this business of national honor, and of the most fundamental principles in the policy of negotiation, seemed wholly to have escaped them. To this fatal hour, the contention in Parliament appeared in another form, and was animated by another spirit. For three hundred years and more, we have had wars with what stood as government in France. In all that period, the language of ministers, whether of boast or of apology, was, that they had left nothing undone for the assertion of the national honor, — the opposition, whether patriotically or factiously, contending that the ministers had been oblivious of the national glory, and had made improper sacrifices of that public interest which they were bound not only to preserve, but by all fair methods to augment. This total change of tone on both sides of your House forms itself no inconsiderable revolution; and I am afraid it prognosticates others of still greater importance. The ministers exhausted the stores of their eloquence in demonstrating that they had quitted the safe, beaten highway of treaty between independent powers, — that, to pacify the enemy, they had made every sacrifice of the national dignity, — and that they had offered to immolate at the same shrine the

most valuable of the national acquisitions. The opposition insisted that the victims were not fat nor fair enough to be offered on the altars of blasphemed Regicide; and it was inferred from thence, that the sacrifical ministers, (who were a sort of intruders in the worship of the new divinity,) in their schismatical devotion, had discovered more of hypocrisy than zeal. They charged them with a concealed resolution to persevere in what these gentlemen have (in perfect consistency, indeed, with themselves, but most irreconcilably with fact and reason) called an unjust and impolitic war.

That day was, I fear, the fatal term of *local* patriotism. On that day, I fear, there was an end of that narrow scheme of relations called our country, with all its pride, its prejudices, and its partial affections. All the little quiet rivulets, that watered an humble, a contracted, but not an unfruitful field, are to be lost in the waste expanse, and boundless, barren ocean of the homicide philanthropy of France. It is no longer an object of terror, the aggrandizement of a new power which teaches as a professor that philanthropy in the chair, whilst it propagates by arms and establishes by conquest the comprehensive system of universal fraternity. In what light is all this viewed in a great assembly? The party which takes the lead there has no longer any apprehensions, except those that arise from not being admitted to the closest and most confidential connections with the metropolis of that fraternity. That reigning party no longer touches on its favorite subject, the display of those horrors that must attend the existence of a power with such dispositions and principles, seated in the heart of Europe. It is satisfied to find some loose,

ambiguous expressions in its former declarations, which may set it free from its professions and engagements. It always speaks of peace with the Regicides as a great and an undoubted blessing, and such a blessing as, if obtained, promises, as much as any human disposition of things can promise, security and permanence. It holds out nothing at all definite towards this security. It only seeks, by a restoration to some of their former owners of some fragments of the general wreck of Europe, to find a plausible plea for a present retreat from an embarrassing position. As to the future, that party is content to leave it covered in a night of the most palpable obscurity. It never once has entered into a particle of detail of what our own situation, or that of other powers, must be, under the blessings of the peace we seek. This defect, to my power, I mean to supply, — that, if any persons should still continue to think an attempt at foresight is any part of the duty of a statesman, I may contribute my trifle to the materials of his speculation.

As to the other party, the minority of to-day, possibly the majority of to-morrow, small in number, but full of talents and every species of energy, which, upon the avowed ground of being more acceptable to France, is a candidate for the helm of this kingdom, it has never changed from the beginning. It has preserved a perennial consistency. This would be a never failing source of true glory, if springing from just and right; but it is truly dreadful, if it be an arm of Styx, which springs out of the profoundest depths of a poisoned soil. The French maxims were by these gentlemen at no time condemned. I speak of their language in the most moderate terms. There

are many who think that they have gone much further, — that they have always magnified and extolled the French maxims, — that, not in the least disgusted or discouraged by the monstrous evils which have attended these maxims from the moment of their adoption both at home and abroad, they still continue to predict that in due time they must produce the greatest good to the poor human race. They obstinately persist in stating those evils as matter of accident, as things wholly collateral to the system.

It is observed, that this party has never spoken of an ally of Great Britain with the smallest degree of respect or regard: on the contrary, it has generally mentioned them under opprobrious appellations, and in such terms of contempt or execration as never had been heard before, — because no such would have formerly been permitted in our public assemblies. The moment, however, that any of those allies quitted this obnoxious connection, the party has instantly passed an act of indemnity and oblivion in their favor. After this, no sort of censure on their conduct, no imputation on their character. From that moment their pardon was sealed in a reverential and mysterious silence. With the gentlemen of this minority, there is no ally, from one end of Europe to the other, with whom we ought not to be ashamed to act. The whole college of the states of Europe is no better than a gang of tyrants. With them all our connections were broken off at once. We ought to have cultivated France, and France alone, from the moment of her Revolution. On that happy change, all our dread of that nation as a power was to cease. She became in an instant dear to our affections and one with our interests. All other nations we ought

to have commanded not to trouble her sacred throes, whilst in labor to bring into an happy birth her abundant litter of constitutions. We ought to have acted under her auspices, in extending her salutary influence upon every side. From that moment England and France were become natural allies, and all the other states natural enemies. The whole face of the world was changed. What was it to us, if she acquired Holland and the Austrian Netherlands? By her conquests she only enlarged the sphere of her beneficence, she only extended the blessings of liberty to so many more foolishly reluctant nations. What was it to England, if, by adding these, among the richest and most peopled countries of the world, to her territories, she thereby left no possible link of communication between us and any other power with whom we could act against her? On this new system of optimism, it is so much the better: so much the further are we removed from the contact with infectious despotism. No longer a thought of a barrier in the Netherlands to Holland against France. All that is obsolete policy. It is fit that France should have both Holland and the Austrian Netherlands too, as a barrier to her against the attacks of despotism. She cannot multiply her securities too much; and as to our security, it is to be found in hers. Had we cherished her from the beginning, and felt for her when attacked, she, poor, good soul, would never have invaded any foreign nation, never murdered her sovereign and his family, never proscribed, never exiled, never imprisoned, never been guilty of extrajudicial massacre or of legal murder. All would have been a golden age, full of peace, order, and liberty, — and philosophy, raying out from Europe,

would have warmed and enlightened the universe; but, unluckily, irritable philosophy, the most irritable of all things, was put into a passion, and provoked into ambition abroad and tyranny at home. They find all this very natural and very justifiable. They choose to forget that other nations, struggling for freedom, have been attacked by their neighbors, or that their neighbors have otherwise interfered in their affairs. Often have neighbors interfered in favor of princes against their rebellious subjects, and often in favor of subjects against their prince. Such cases fill half the pages of history; yet never were they used as an apology, much less as a justification, for atrocious cruelty in princes, or for general massacre and confiscation on the part of revolted subjects, — never as a politic cause for suffering any such powers to aggrandize themselves without limit and without measure. A thousand times have we seen it asserted in public prints and pamphlets, that, if the nobility and priesthood of France had stayed at home, their property never would have been confiscated. One would think that none of the clergy had been robbed previous to their deportation, or that their deportation had, on their part, been a voluntary act. One would think that the nobility and gentry, and merchants and bankers, who stayed at home, had enjoyed their property in security and repose. The assertors of these positions well know that the lot of thousands who remained at home was far more terrible, that the most cruel imprisonment was only a harbinger of a cruel and ignominious death, and that in this mother country of freedom there were no less than *three hundred thousand* at one time in prison. I go no further. I instance

only these representations of the party, as staring indications of partiality to that sect to whose dominion they would have left this country nothing to oppose but her own naked force, and consequently subjected us, on every reverse of fortune, to the imminent danger of falling under those very evils, in that very system, which are attributed, not to its own nature, but to the perverseness of others. There is nothing in the world so difficult as to put men in a state of judicial neutrality. A leaning there must ever be, and it is of the first importance to any nation to observe to what side that leaning inclines,—whether to our own community, or to one with which it is in a state of hostility.

Men are rarely without some sympathy in the sufferings of others; but in the immense and diversified mass of human misery, which may be pitied, but cannot be relieved, in the gross, the mind must make a choice. Our sympathy is always more forcibly attracted towards the misfortunes of certain persons, and in certain descriptions: and this sympathetic attraction discovers, beyond a possibility of mistake, our mental affinities and elective affections. It is a much surer proof than the strongest declaration of a real connection and of an overruling bias in the mind. I am told that the active sympathies of this party have been chiefly, if not wholly, attracted to the sufferings of the patriarchal rebels who were amongst the promulgators of the maxims of the French Revolution, and who have suffered from their apt and forward scholars some part of the evils which they had themselves so liberally distributed to all the other parts of the community. Some of these men, flying from the knives which

they had sharpened against their country and its laws, rebelling against the very powers they had set over themselves by their rebellion against their sovereign, given up by those very armies to whose faithful attachment they trusted for their safety and support, after they had completely debauched all military fidelity in its source, — some of these men, I say, had fallen into the hands of the head of that family the most illustrious person of which they had three times cruelly imprisoned, and delivered in that state of captivity to those hands from which they were able to relieve neither her, nor their own nearest and most venerable kindred. One of these men, connected with this country by no circumstance of birth, — not related to any distinguished families here, — recommended by no service, — endeared to this nation by no act or even expression of kindness, — comprehended in no league or common cause, — embraced by no laws of public hospitality, — this man was the only one to be found in Europe, in whose favor the British nation, passing judgment without hearing on its almost only ally, was to force (and that not by soothing interposition, but with every reproach for inhumanity, cruelty, and breach of the laws of war) from prison. We were to release him from that prison out of which, in abuse of the lenity of government amidst its rigor, and in violation of at least an understood parole, he had attempted an escape, — an escape excusable, if you will, but naturally productive of strict and vigilant confinement. The earnestness of gentlemen to free this person was the more extraordinary because there was full as little in him to raise admiration, from any eminent qualities he possessed, as there was to

excite an interest, from any that were amiable. A person not only of no real civil or literary talents, but of no specious appearance of either, — and in his military profession not marked as a leader in any one act of able or successful enterprise, unless his leading on (or his following) the allied army of Amazonian and male cannibal Parisians to Versailles, on the famous 5th of October, 1789, is to make his glory. Any other exploit of his, as a general, I never heard of. But the triumph of general fraternity was but the more signalized by the total want of particular claims in that case, — and by postponing all such claims in a case where they really existed, where they stood embossed, and in a manner forced themselves on the view of common, shortsighted benevolence. Whilst, for its improvement, the humanity of these gentlemen was thus on its travels, and had got as far off as Olmütz, they never thought of a place and a person much nearer to them, or of moving an instruction to Lord Malmesbury in favor of their own suffering countryman, Sir Sydney Smith.

This officer, having attempted, with great gallantry, to cut out a vessel from one of the enemy's harbors, was taken after an obstinate resistance, — such as obtained him the marked respect of those who were witnesses of his valor, and knew the circumstances in which it was displayed. Upon his arrival at Paris, he was instantly thrown into prison, where the nature of his situation will best be understood by knowing that amongst its *mitigations* was the permission to walk occasionally in the court and to enjoy the privilege of shaving himself. On the old system of feelings and principles, his suffer-

ings might have been entitled to consideration, and, even in a comparison with those of Citizen La Fayette, to a priority in the order of compassion. If the ministers had neglected to take any steps in his favor, a declaration of the sense of the House of Commons would have stimulated them to their duty. If they had caused a representation to be made, such a proceeding would have added force to it. If reprisal should be thought advisable, the address of the House would have given an additional sanction to a measure which would have been, indeed, justifiable without any other sanction than its own reason. But no. Nothing at all like it. In fact, the merit of Sir Sydney Smith, and his claim on British compassion, was of a kind altogether different from that which interested so deeply the authors of the motion in favor of Citizen La Fayette. In my humble opinion, Captain Sir Sydney Smith has another sort of merit with the British nation, and something of a higher claim on British humanity, than Citizen La Fayette. Faithful, zealous, and ardent in the service of his king and country, — full of spirit, — full of resources, — going out of the beaten road, but going right, because his uncommon enterprise was not conducted by a vulgar judgment, — in his profession Sir Sydney Smith might be considered as a distinguished person, if any person could well be distinguished in a service in which scarce a commander can be named without putting you in mind of some action of intrepidity, skill, and vigilance that has given them a fair title to contend with any men and in any age. But I will say nothing farther of the merits of Sir Sydney Smith: the mortal animosity of the Regicide enemy supersedes all other panegyric. Their hatred is a judgment

in his favor without appeal. At present he is lodged in the tower of the Temple, the last prison of Louis the Sixteenth, and the last but one of Marie Antoinette of Austria, — the prison of Louis the Seventeenth, — the prison of Elizabeth of Bourbon. There he lies, unpitied by the grand philanthropy, to meditate upon the fate of those who are faithful to their king and country. Whilst this prisoner, secluded from intercourse, was indulging in these cheering reflections, he might possibly have had the further consolation of learning (by means of the insolent exultation of his guards) that there was an English ambassador at Paris; he might have had the proud comfort of hearing that this ambassador had the honor of passing his mornings in respectful attendance at the office of a Regicide pettifogger, and that in the evening he relaxed in the amusements of the opera, and in the spectacle of an audience totally new, — an audience in which he had the pleasure of seeing about him not a single face that he could formerly have known in Paris, but, in the place of that company, one indeed more than equal to it in display of gayety, splendor, and luxury, — a set of abandoned wretches, squandering in insolent riot the spoils of their bleeding country: a subject of profound reflection both to the prisoner and to the ambassador.

Whether all the matter upon which I have grounded my opinion of this last party be fully authenticated or not must be left to those who have had the opportunity of a nearer view of its conduct, and who have been more attentive in their perusal of the writings which have appeared in its favor. But for my part, I have never heard the gross facts on which I ground my idea of their marked partiality to the

reigning tyranny in France in any part denied. I am not surprised at all this. Opinions, as they sometimes follow, so they frequently guide and direct the affections; and men may become more attached to the country of their principles than to the country of their birth. What I have stated here is only to mark the spirit which seems to me, though in somewhat different ways, to actuate our great party-leaders, and to trace this first pattern of a negotiation to its true source.

Such is the present state of our public councils. Well might I be ashamed of what seems to be a censure of two great factions, with the two most eloquent men which this country ever saw at the head of them, if I had found that either of them could support their conduct by any example in the history of their country. I should very much prefer their judgment to my own, if I were not obliged, by an infinitely overbalancing weight of authority, to prefer the collected wisdom of ages to the abilities of any two men living. — I return to the Declaration, with which the history of the abortion of a treaty with the Regicides is closed.

After such an elaborate display had been made of the injustice and insolence of an enemy who seems to have been irritated by every one of the means which had been commonly used with effect to soothe the rage of intemperate power, the natural result would be, that the scabbard in which we in vain attempted to plunge our sword should have been thrown away with scorn. It would have been natural, that, rising in the fulness of their might, insulted majesty, despised dignity, violated justice, rejected supplication, patience goaded into fury, would have

poured out all the length of the reins upon all the wrath which they had so long restrained. It might have been expected, that, emulous of the glory of the youthful hero * in alliance with him, touched by the example of what one man well formed and well placed may do in the most desperate state of affairs, convinced there is a courage of the cabinet full as powerful and far less vulgar than that of the field, our minister would have changed the whole line of that unprosperous prudence which hitherto had produced all the effects of the blindest temerity. If he found his situation full of danger, (and I do not deny that it is perilous in the extreme,) he must feel that it is also full of glory, and that he is placed on a stage than which no muse of fire that had ascended the highest heaven of invention could imagine anything more awful and august. It was hoped that in this swelling scene in which he moved, with some of the first potentates of Europe for his fellow-actors, and with so many of the rest for the anxious spectators of a part which, as he plays it, determines forever their destiny and his own, like Ulysses in the unravelling point of the epic story, he would have thrown off his patience and his rags together, and, stripped of unworthy disguises, he would have stood forth in the form and in the attitude of an hero. On that day it was thought he would have assumed the port of Mars; that he would bid to be brought forth from their hideous kennel (where his scrupulous tenderness had too long immured them) those impatient dogs of war whose fierce regards affright even the minister of vengeance that feeds them; that he would let them

* The Archduke Charles of Austria.

loose, in famine, fever, plagues, and death, upon a guilty race, to whose frame, and to all whose habit, order, peace, religion, and virtue are alien and abhorrent. It was expected that he would at last have thought of active and effectual war; that he would no longer amuse the British lion in the chase of mice and rats; that he would no longer employ the whole naval power of Great Britain, once the terror of the world, to prey upon the miserable remains of a peddling commerce, which the enemy did not regard, and from which none could profit. It was expected that he would have reasserted the justice of his cause; that he would have reanimated whatever remained to him of his allies, and endeavored to recover those whom their fears had led astray; that he would have rekindled the martial ardor of his citizens; that he would have held out to them the example of their ancestry, the assertor of Europe, and the scourge of French ambition; that he would have reminded them of a posterity, which, if this nefarious robbery, under the fraudulent name and false color of a government, should in full power be seated in the heart of Europe, must forever be consigned to vice, impiety, barbarism, and the most ignominious slavery of body and mind. In so holy a cause it was presumed that he would (as in the beginning of the war he did) have opened all the temples, and with prayer, with fasting, and with supplication, (better directed than to the grim Moloch of Regicide in France,) have called upon us to raise that united cry which has so often stormed heaven, and with a pious violence forced down blessings upon a repentant people. It was hoped, that, when he had invoked upon his endeavors the favorable regard of

the Protector of the human race, it would be seen that his menaces to the enemy and his prayers to the Almighty were not followed, but accompanied, with correspondent action. It was hoped that his shrilling trumpet should be heard, not to announce a show, but to sound a charge.

Such a conclusion to such a declaration and such a speech would have been a thing of course,—so much a thing of course, that I will be bold to say, if in any ancient history, the Roman for instance, (supposing that in Rome the matter of such a detail could have been furnished,) a consul had gone through such a long train of proceedings, and that there was a chasm in the manuscripts by which we had lost the conclusion of the speech and the subsequent part of the narrative, all critics would agree that a Freinshemius would have been thought to have managed the supplementary business of a continuator most unskilfully, and to have supplied the hiatus most improbably, if he had not filled up the gaping space in a manner somewhat similar (though better executed) to what I have imagined. But too often different is rational conjecture from melancholy fact. This exordium, as contrary to all the rules of rhetoric as to those more essential rules of policy which our situation would dictate, is intended as a prelude to a deadening and disheartening proposition; as if all that a minister had to fear in a war of his own conducting was, that the people should pursue it with too ardent a zeal. Such a tone as I guessed the minister would have taken, I am very sure, is the true, unsuborned, unsophisticated language of genuine, natural feeling, under the smart of patience exhausted and abused. Such a conduct as

the facts stated in the Declaration gave room to expect is that which true wisdom would have dictated under the impression of those genuine feelings. Never was there a jar or discord between genuine sentiment and sound policy. Never, no, never, did Nature say one thing and Wisdom say another. Nor are sentiments of elevation in themselves turgid and unnatural. Nature is never more truly herself than in her grandest forms. The Apollo of Belvedere (if the universal robber has yet left him at Belvedere) is as much in Nature as any figure from the pencil of Rembrandt or any clown in the rustic revels of Téniers. Indeed, it is when a great nation is in great difficulties that minds must exalt themselves to the occasion, or all is lost. Strong passion under the direction of a feeble reason feeds a low fever, which serves only to destroy the body that entertains it. But vehement passion does not always indicate an infirm judgment. It often accompanies, and actuates, and is even auxiliary to a powerful understanding; and when they both conspire and act harmoniously, their force is great to destroy disorder within and to repel injury from abroad. If ever there was a time that calls on us for no vulgar conception of things, and for exertions in no vulgar strain, it is the awful hour that Providence has now appointed to this nation. Every little measure is a great error, and every great error will bring on no small ruin. Nothing can be directed above the mark that we must aim at: everything below it is absolutely thrown away.

Except with the addition of the unheard-of insult offered to our ambassador by his rude expulsion, we are never to forget that the point on which the negotiation with De la Croix broke off was exactly that

which had stifled in its cradle the negotiation we had attempted with Barthélemy. Each of these transactions concluded with a manifesto upon our part; but the last of our manifestoes very materially differed from the first. The first Declaration stated, that "*nothing was left* but to prosecute a war *equally just and necessary.*" In the second the justice and necessity of the war is dropped: the sentence importing that nothing was left but the prosecution of such a war disappears also. Instead of this resolution to prosecute the war, we sink into a whining lamentation on the abrupt termination of the treaty. We have nothing left but the last resource of female weakness, of helpless infancy, of doting decrepitude, — wailing and lamentation. We cannot even utter a sentiment of vigor; — "his Majesty has only to lament." A poor possession, to be left to a great monarch! Mark the effect produced on our councils by continued insolence and inveterate hostility. We grow more malleable under their blows. In reverential silence we smother the cause and origin of the war. On that fundamental article of faith we leave every one to abound in his own sense. In the minister's speech, glossing on the Declaration, it is indeed mentioned, but very feebly. The lines are so faintly drawn as hardly to be traced. They only make a part of our *consolation* in the circumstances which we so dolefully lament. We rest our merits on the humility, the earnestness of solicitation, and the perfect good faith of those submissions which have been used to persuade our Regicide enemies to grant us some sort of peace. Not a word is said which might not have been full as well said, and much better too, if the British nation had appeared

in the simple character of a penitent convinced of his errors and offences, and offering, by penances, by pilgrimages, and by all the modes of expiation ever devised by anxious, restless guilt, to make all the atonement in his miserable power.

The Declaration ends, as I have before quoted it, with a solemn voluntary pledge, the most full and the most solemn that ever was given, of our resolution (if so it may be called) to enter again into the very same course. It requires nothing more of the Regicides than to furnish some sort of excuse, some sort of colorable pretext, for our renewing the supplications of innocence at the feet of guilt. It leaves the moment of negotiation, a most important moment, to the choice of the enemy. He is to regulate it according to the convenience of his affairs. He is to bring it forward at that time when it may best serve to establish his authority at home and to extend his power abroad. A dangerous assurance for this nation to give, whether it is broken or whether it is kept. As all treaty was broken off, and broken off in the manner we have seen, the field of future conduct ought to be reserved free and unincumbered to our future discretion. As to the sort of condition prefixed to the pledge, namely, "that the enemy should be disposed to enter into the work of general pacification with the spirit of reconciliation and equity," this phraseology cannot possibly be considered otherwise than as so many words thrown in to fill the sentence and to round it to the ear. We prefixed the same plausible conditions to any renewal of the negotiation, in our manifesto on the rejection of our proposals at Basle. We did not consider those conditions as binding. We opened a much more serious

negotiation without any sort of regard to them; and there is no new negotiation which we can possibly open upon fewer indications of conciliation and equity than were to be discovered when we entered into our last at Paris. Any of the slightest pretences, any of the most loose, formal, equivocating expressions, would justify us, under the peroration of this piece, in again sending the last or some other Lord Malmesbury to Paris.

I hope I misunderstand this pledge, — or that we shall show no more regard to it than we have done to all the faith that we have plighted to vigor and resolution in our former Declaration. If I am to understand the conclusion of the Declaration to be what unfortunately it seems to me, we make an engagement with the enemy, without any correspondent engagement on his side. We seem to have cut ourselves off from any benefit which an intermediate state of things might furnish to enable us totally to overturn that power, so little connected with moderation and justice. By holding out no hope, either to the justly discontented in France, or to any foreign power, and leaving the recommencement of all treaty to this identical junto of assassins, we do in effect assure and guaranty to them the full possession of the rich fruits of their confiscations, of their murders of men, women, and children, and of all the multiplied, endless, nameless iniquities by which they have obtained their power. We guaranty to them the possession of a country, such and so situated as France, round, entire, immensely perhaps augmented.

"Well," some will say, "in this case we have only submitted to the nature of things." The nature of

things is, I admit, a sturdy adversary. This might be alleged as a plea for our attempt at a treaty. But what plea of that kind can be alleged, after the treaty was dead and gone, in favor of this posthumous Declaration? No necessity has driven us to *that* pledge. It is without a counterpart even in expectation. And what can be stated to obviate the evil which that solitary engagement must produce on the understandings or the fears of men? I ask, what have the Regicides promised you in return, in case *you* should show what *they* would call dispositions to conciliation and equity, whilst you are giving that pledge from the throne, and engaging Parliament to counter-secure it? It is an awful consideration. It was on the very day of the date of this wonderful pledge,* in which we assumed the Directorial government as lawful, and in which we engaged ourselves to treat with them whenever they pleased, — it was on that very day the Regicide fleet was weighing anchor from one of your harbors, where it had remained four days in perfect quiet. These harbors of the British dominions are the ports of France. They are of no use but to protect an enemy from your best allies, the storms of heaven and his own rashness. Had the West of Ireland been an unportuous coast, the French naval power would have been undone. The enemy uses the moment for hostility, without the least regard to your future dispositions of equity and conciliation. They go out of what were once your harbors, and they return to them at their pleasure. Eleven days they had the full use of Bantry Bay, and at length their fleet returns from their harbor of Bantry to their harbor of Brest. Whilst you are invoking the

* Dec. 27, 1796.

propitious spirit of Regicide equity and conciliation, they answer you with an attack. They turn out the pacific bearer of your "how do you dos," Lord Malmesbury; and they return your visit, and their "thanks for your obliging inquiries," by their old practised assassin, Hoche. They come to attack — what? A town, a fort, a naval station? They come to attack your king, your Constitution, and the very being of that Parliament which was holding out to them these pledges, together with the entireness of the empire, the laws, liberties, and properties of all the people. We know that they meditated the very same invasion, and for the very same purposes, upon this kingdom, and, had the coast been as opportune, would have effected it.

Whilst *you* are in vain torturing your invention to assure them of *your* sincerity and good faith, they have left no doubt concerning *their* good faith and *their* sincerity towards those to whom they have engaged their honor. To their power they have been true to the only pledge they have ever yet given to you, or to any of yours: I mean the solemn engagement which they entered into with the deputation of traitors who appeared at their bar, from England and from Ireland, in 1792. They have been true and faithful to the engagement which they had made more largely, — that is, their engagement to give effectual aid to insurrection and treason, wherever they might appear in the world. We have seen the British Declaration. This is the counter Declaration of the Directory. This is the reciprocal pledge which Regicide amity gives to the conciliatory pledges of kings. But, thank God, such pledges cannot exist single. They have no counterpart; and if they had,

the enemy's conduct cancels such declarations, — and, I trust, along with them, cancels everything of mischief and dishonor that they contain.

There is one thing in this business which appears to be wholly unaccountable, or accountable on a supposition I dare not entertain for a moment. I cannot help asking, Why all this pains to clear the British nation of ambition, perfidy, and the insatiate thirst of war? At what period of time was it that our country has deserved that load of infamy of which nothing but preternatural humiliation in language and conduct can serve to clear us? If we have deserved this kind of evil fame from anything we have done in a state of prosperity, I am sure that it is not an abject conduct in adversity that can clear our reputation. Well is it known that ambition can creep as well as soar. The pride of no person in a flourishing condition is more justly to be dreaded than that of him who is mean and cringing under a doubtful and unprosperous fortune. But it seems it was thought necessary to give some out-of-the-way proofs of our sincerity, as well as of our freedom from ambition. Is, then, fraud and falsehood become the distinctive character of Englishmen? Whenever your enemy chooses to accuse you of perfidy and ill faith, will you put it into his power to throw you into the purgatory of self-humiliation? Is his charge equal to the finding of the grand jury of Europe, and sufficient to put you upon your trial? But on that trial I will defend the English ministry. I am sorry that on some points I have, on the principles I have always opposed, so good a defence to make. They were not the first to begin the war. They did not excite the general confederacy in Europe, which was

so properly formed on the alarm given by the Jacobinism of France. They did not begin with an hostile aggression on the Regicides, or any of their allies. These parricides of their own country, disciplining themselves for foreign by domestic violence, were the first to attack a power that was our ally by nature, by habit, and by the sanction of multiplied treaties. Is it not true that they were the first to declare war upon this kingdom? Is every word in the declaration from Downing Street concerning their conduct, and concerning ours and that of our allies, so obviously false that it is necessary to give some new-invented proofs of our good faith in order to expunge the memory of all this perfidy?

We know that over-laboring a point of this kind has the direct contrary effect from what we wish. We know that there is a legal presumption against men, *quando se nimis purgitant;* and if a charge of ambition is not refuted by an affected humility, certainly the character of fraud and perfidy is still less to be washed away by indications of meanness. Fraud and prevarication are servile vices. They sometimes grow out of the necessities, always out of the habits, of slavish and degenerate spirits; and on the theatre of the world, it is not by assuming the mask of a Davus or a Geta that an actor will obtain credit for manly simplicity and a liberal openness of proceeding. It is an erect countenance, it is a firm adherence to principle, it is a power of resisting false shame and frivolous fear, that assert our good faith and honor, and assure to us the confidence of mankind. Therefore all these negotiations, and all the declarations with which they were preceded and followed, can only serve to raise presumptions against

that good faith and public integrity the fame of which to preserve inviolate is so much the interest and duty of every nation.

The pledge is an engagement "to all Europe." This is the more extraordinary, because it is a pledge which no power in Europe, whom I have yet heard of, has thought proper to require at our hands. I am not in the secrets of office, and therefore I may be excused for proceeding upon probabilities and exterior indications. I have surveyed all Europe from the east to the west, from the north to the south, in search of this call upon us to purge ourselves of "subtle *duplicity* and a *Punic* style" in our proceedings. I have not heard that his Excellency the Ottoman ambassador has expressed his doubts of the British sincerity in our negotiation with the most unchristian republic lately set up at our door. What sympathy in that quarter may have introduced a remonstrance upon the want of faith in this nation I cannot positively say. If it exists, it is in Turkish or Arabic, and possibly is not yet translated. But none of the nations which compose the old Christian world have I yet heard as calling upon us for those judicial purgations and ordeals, by fire and water, which we have chosen to go through; — for the other great proof, by battle, we seem to decline.

For whose use, entertainment, or instruction are all those overstrained and overlabored proceedings in council, in negotiation, and in speeches in Parliament intended? What royal cabinet is to be enriched with these high-finished pictures of the arrogance of the sworn enemies of kings and the meek patience of a British administration? In what heart is it intended to kindle pity towards our multiplied mortifications

and disgraces? At best it is superfluous. What nation is unacquainted with the haughty disposition of the common enemy of all nations? It has been more than seen, it has been felt, — not only by those who have been the victims of their imperious rapacity, but, in a degree, by those very powers who have consented to establish this robbery, that they might be able to copy it, and with impunity to make new usurpations of their own.

The King of Prussia has hypothecated in trust to the Regicides his rich and fertile territories on the Rhine, as a pledge of his zeal and affection to the cause of liberty and equality. He has seen them robbed with unbounded liberty and with the most levelling equality. The woods are wasted, the country is ravaged, property is confiscated, and the people are put to bear a double yoke, in the exactions of a tyrannical government and in the contributions of an hostile irruption. Is it to satisfy the Court of Berlin that the Court of London is to give the same sort of pledge of its sincerity and good faith to the French Directory? It is not that heart full of sensibility, it is not Lucchesini, the minister of his Prussian Majesty, the late ally of England, and the present ally of its enemy, who has demanded this pledge of our sincerity, as the price of the renewal of the long lease of his sincere friendship to this kingdom.

It is not to our enemy, the now faithful ally of Regicide, late the faithful ally of Great Britain, the Catholic king, that we address our doleful lamentation: it is not to the *Prince of Peace*, whose declaration of war was one of the first auspicious omens of general tranquillity, which our dove-like ambassador, with the olive-branch in his beak, was saluted with at his entrance into the ark of clean birds at Paris.

Surely it is not to the Tetrarch of Sardinia, now the faithful ally of a power who has seized upon all his fortresses and confiscated the oldest dominions of his house, — it is not to this once powerful, once respected, and once cherished ally of Great Britain, that we mean to prove the sincerity of the peace which we offered to make at his expense. Or is it to him we are to prove the arrogance of the power who, under the name of friend, oppresses him, and the poor remains of his subjects, with all the ferocity of the most cruel enemy?

It is not to Holland, under the name of an ally, laid under a permanent military contribution, filled with their double garrison of barbarous Jacobin troops and ten times more barbarous Jacobin clubs and assemblies, that we find ourselves obliged to give this pledge.

Is it to Genoa that we make this kind promise, — a state which the Regicides were to defend in a favorable neutrality, but whose neutrality has been, by the gentle influence of Jacobin authority, forced into the trammels of an alliance, — whose alliance has been secured by the admission of French garrisons, — and whose peace has been forever ratified by a forced declaration of war against ourselves?

It is not the Grand Duke of Tuscany who claims this declaration, — not the Grand Duke, who for his early sincerity, for his love of peace, and for his entire confidence in the amity of the assassins of his house, has been complimented in the British Parliament with the name of "*the wisest sovereign in Europe*": it is not this pacific Solomon, or his philosophic, cudgelled ministry, cudgelled by English and by French, whose wisdom and philosophy between

them have placed Leghorn in the hands of the enemy of the Austrian family, and driven the only profitable commerce of Tuscany from its only port: it is not this sovereign, a far more able statesman than any of the Medici in whose chair he sits, it is not the philosopher Carletti, more ably speculative than Galileo, more profoundly politic than Machiavel, that call upon us so loudly to give the same happy proofs of the same good faith to the republic always the same, always one and indivisible.

It is not Venice, whose principal cities the enemy has appropriated to himself, and scornfully desired the state to indemnify itself from the Emperor, that we wish to convince of the pride and the despotism of an enemy who loads us with his scoffs and buffets.

It is not for his Holiness we intend this consolatory declaration of our own weakness, and of the tyrannous temper of his grand enemy. That prince has known both the one and the other from the beginning. The artists of the French Revolution had given their very first essays and sketches of robbery and desolation against his territories, in a far more cruel "murdering piece" than had ever entered into the imagination of painter or poet. Without ceremony they tore from his cherishing arms the possessions which he held for five hundred years, undisturbed by all the ambition of all the ambitious monarchs who during that period have reigned in France. Is it to him, in whose wrong we have in our late negotiation ceded his now unhappy countries near the Rhone, lately amongst the most flourishing (perhaps the most flourishing for their extent) of all the countries upon earth, that we are to prove the sincerity of our resolution to make peace with the Republic of Bar-

barism? That venerable potentate and pontiff is sunk deep into the vale of years; he is half disarmed by his peaceful character; his dominions are more than half disarmed by a peace of two hundred years, defended as they were, not by force, but by reverence: yet, in all these straits, we see him display, amidst the recent ruins and the new defacements of his plundered capital, along with the mild and decorated piety of the modern, all the spirit and magnanimity of ancient Rome. Does he, who, though himself unable to defend them, nobly refused to receive pecuniary compensations for the protection he owed to his people of Avignon, Carpentras, and the Venaissin, — does he want proofs of our good disposition to deliver over that people, without any security for them, or any compensation to their sovereign, to this cruel enemy? Does he want to be satisfied of the sincerity of our humiliation to France, who has seen his free, fertile, and happy city and state of Bologna, the cradle of regenerated law, the seat of sciences and of arts, so hideously metamorphosed, whilst he was crying to Great Britain for aid, and offering to purchase that aid at any price? Is it him, who sees that chosen spot of plenty and delight converted into a Jacobin ferocious republic, dependent on the homicides of France, — is it him, who, from the miracles of his beneficent industry, has done a work which defied the power of the Roman emperors, though with an enthralled world to labor for them, — is it him, who has drained and cultivated the Pontine Marshes, that we are to satisfy of our cordial spirit of conciliation with those who, in their equity, are restoring Holland again to the seas, whose maxims poison more than the exhalations of the most

deadly fens, and who turn all the fertilities of Nature and of Art into an howling desert? Is it to him that we are to demonstrate the good faith of our submissions to the Cannibal Republic, — to him, who is commanded to deliver up into their hands Ancona and Civita Vecchia, seats of commerce raised by the wise and liberal labors and expenses of the present and late pontiffs, ports not more belonging to the Ecclesiastical State than to the commerce of Great Britain, thus wresting from his hands the power of the keys of the centre of Italy, as before they had taken possession of the keys of the northern part from the hands of the unhappy King of Sardinia, the natural ally of England? Is it to him we are to prove our good faith in the peace which we are soliciting to receive from the hands of his and our robbers, the enemies of all arts, all sciences, all civilization, and all commerce?

Is it to the Cispadane or to the Transpadane republics, which have been forced to bow under the galling yoke of French liberty, that we address all these pledges of our sincerity and love of peace with their unnatural parents?

Are we by this Declaration to satisfy the King of Naples, whom we have left to struggle as he can, after our abdication of Corsica, and the flight of the whole naval force of England out of the whole circuit of the Mediterranean, abandoning our allies, our commerce, and the honor of a nation once the protectress of all other nations, because strengthened by the independence and enriched by the commerce of them all? By the express provisions of a recent treaty, we had engaged with the King of Naples to keep a naval force in the Mediterranean. But, good God! was a treaty at all necessary for this? The

uniform policy of this kingdom as a state, and eminently so as a commercial state, has at all times led us to keep a powerful squadron and a commodious naval station in that central sea, which borders upon and which connects a far greater number and variety of states, European, Asiatic, and African, than any other. Without such a naval force, France must become despotic mistress of that sea, and of all the countries whose shores it washes. Our commerce must become vassal to her and dependent on her will. Since we are come no longer to trust to our force in arms, but to our dexterity in negotiation, and begin to pay a desperate court to a proud and coy usurpation, and have finally sent an ambassador to the Bourbon Regicides at Paris, the King of Naples, who saw that no reliance was to be placed on our engagements, or on any pledge of our adherence to our nearest and dearest interests, has been obliged to send his ambassador also to join the rest of the squalid tribe of the representatives of degraded kings. This monarch, surely, does not want any proof of the sincerity of our amicable dispositions to that amicable republic, into whose arms he has been given by our desertion of him.

To look to the powers of the North. — It is not to the Danish ambassador, insolently treated in his own character and in ours, that we are to give proofs of the Regicide arrogance, and of our disposition to submit to it.

With regard to Sweden I cannot say much. The French influence is struggling with her independence; and they who consider the manner in which the ambassador of that power was treated not long since at Paris, and the manner in which the father

of the present King of Sweden (himself the victim of regicide principles and passions) would have looked on the present assassins of France, will not be very prompt to believe that the young King of Sweden has made this kind of requisition to the King of Great Britain, and has given this kind of auspice of his new government.

I speak last of the most important of all. It certainly was not the late Empress of Russia at whose instance we have given this pledge. It is not the new Emperor, the inheritor of so much glory, and placed in a situation of so much delicacy and difficulty for the preservation of that inheritance, who calls on England, the natural ally of his dominions, to deprive herself of her power of action, and to bind herself to France. France at no time, and in none of its fashions, least of all in its last, has been ever looked upon as the friend either of Russia or of Great Britain. Everything good, I trust, is to be expected from this prince, — whatever may be without authority given out of an influence over his mind possessed by that only potentate from whom he has anything to apprehend or with whom he has much even to discuss.

This sovereign knows, I have no doubt, and feels, on what sort of bottom is to be laid the foundation of a Russian throne. He knows what a rock of native granite is to form the pedestal of his statue who is to emulate Peter the Great. His renown will be in continuing with ease and safety what his predecessor was obliged to achieve through mighty struggles. He is sensible that his business is not to innovate, but to secure and to establish, — that reformations at this day are attempts at best of ambiguous utility.

He will revere his father with the piety of a son, but in his government he will imitate the policy of his mother. His father, with many excellent qualities, had a short reign, — because, being a native Russian, he was unfortunately advised to act in the spirit of a foreigner. His mother reigned over Russia three-and-thirty years with the greatest glory, — because, with the disadvantage of being a foreigner born, she made herself a Russian. A wise prince like the present will improve his country; but it will be cautiously and progressively, upon its own native groundwork of religion, manners, habitudes, and alliances. If I prognosticate right, it is not the Emperor of Russia that ever will call for extravagant proofs of our desire to reconcile ourselves to the irreconcilable enemy of all thrones.

I do not know why I should not include America among the European powers, — because she is of European origin, and has not yet, like France, destroyed all traces of manners, laws, opinions, and usages which she drew from Europe. As long as that Europe shall have any possessions either in the southern or the northern parts of that America, even separated as it is by the ocean, it must be considered as a part of the European system. It is not America, menaced with internal ruin from the attempts to plant Jacobinism instead of liberty in that country, — it is not America, whose independence is directly attacked by the French, the enemies of the independence of all nations, that calls upon us to give security by disarming ourselves in a treacherous peace. By such a peace, we shall deliver the Americans, their liberty, and their order, without resource, to the mercy of their imperious allies, who will have peace or neu-

trality with no state which is not ready to join her in war against England.

Having run round the whole circle of the European system, wherever it acts, I must affirm that all the foreign powers who are not leagued with France for the utter destruction of all balance through Europe and throughout the world demand other assurances from this kingdom than are given in that Declaration. They require assurances, not of the sincerity of our good dispositions towards the usurpation in France, but of our affection towards the college of the ancient states of Europe, and pledges of our constancy, our fidelity, and of our fortitude in resisting to the last the power that menaces them all. The apprehension from which they wish to be delivered cannot be from anything they dread in the ambition of England. Our power must be their strength. They hope more from us than they fear. I am sure the only ground of their hope, and of our hope, is in the greatness of mind hitherto shown by the people of this nation, and its adherence to the unalterable principles of its ancient policy, whatever government may finally prevail in France. I have entered into this detail of the wishes and expectations of the European powers, in order to point out more clearly not so much what their disposition as (a consideration of far greater importance) what their situation demands, according as that situation is related to the Regicide Republic and to this kingdom.

Then, if it is not to satisfy the foreign powers we make this assurance, to what power at home is it that we pay all this humiliating court? Not to the old Whigs or to the ancient Tories of this kingdom,

—if any memory of such ancient divisions still exists amongst us. To which of the principles of these parties is this assurance agreeable? Is it to the Whigs we are to recommend the aggrandizement of France, and the subversion of the balance of power? Is it to the Tories we are to recommend our eagerness to cement ourselves with the enemies of royalty and religion? But if these parties, which by their dissensions have so often distracted the kingdom, which by their union have once saved it, and which by their collision and mutual resistance have preserved the variety of this Constitution in its unity, be (as I believe they are) nearly extinct by the growth of new ones, which have their roots in the present circumstances of the times, I wish to know to which of these new descriptions this Declaration is addressed. It can hardly be to those persons who, in the new distribution of parties, consider the conservation in England of the ancient order of things as necessary to preserve order everywhere else, and who regard the general conservation of order in other countries as reciprocally necessary to preserve the same state of things in these islands. That party never can wish to see Great Britain pledge herself to give the lead and the ground of advantage and superiority to the France of to-day, in any treaty which is to settle Europe. I insist upon it, that, so far from expecting such an engagement, they are generally stupefied and confounded with it. That the other party, which demands great changes here, and is so pleased to see them everywhere else, which party I call Jacobin, that this faction does, from the bottom of its heart, approve the Declaration, and does erect its crest upon the engagement, there can be

little doubt. To them it may be addressed with propriety, for it answers their purposes in every point.

The party in opposition within the House of Lords and Commons it is irreverent, and half a breach of privilege, (far from my thoughts,) to consider as Jacobin. This party has always denied the existence of such a faction, and has treated the machinations of those whom you and I call Jacobins as so many forgeries and fictions of the minister and his adherents, to find a pretext for destroying freedom and setting up an arbitrary power in this kingdom. However, whether this minority has a leaning towards the French system or only a charitable toleration of those who lean that way, it is certain that they have always attacked the sincerity of the minister in the same modes, and on the very same grounds, and nearly in the same terms, with the Directory. It must therefore be at the tribunal of the minority (from the whole tenor of the speech) that the minister appeared to consider himself obliged to purge himself of duplicity. It was at their bar that he held up his hand; it was on their *sellette* that he seemed to answer interrogatories; it was on their principles that he defended his whole conduct. They certainly take what the French call the *haut du pavé*. They have loudly called for the negotiation. It was accorded to them. They engaged their support of the war with vigor, in case peace was not granted on honorable terms. Peace was not granted on any terms, honorable or shameful. Whether these judges, few in number, but powerful in jurisdiction, are satisfied, — whether they to whom this new pledge is hypothecated have redeemed their own, — whether they have given one particle more of their support

to ministry, or even favored them with their good opinion or their candid construction, I leave it to those who recollect that memorable debate to determine.

The fact is, that neither this Declaration, nor the negotiation which is its subject, could serve any one good purpose, foreign or domestic; it could conduce to no end, either with regard to allies or neutrals. It tends neither to bring back the misled, nor to give courage to the fearful, nor to animate and confirm those who are hearty and zealous in the cause.

I hear it has been said (though I can scarcely believe it) by a distinguished person, in an assembly where, if there be less of the torrent and tempest of eloquence, more guarded expression is to be expected, that, indeed, there was no just ground of hope in this business from the beginning.

It is plain that this noble person, however conversant in negotiation, having been employed in no less than four embassies, and in two hemispheres, and in one of those negotiations having fully experienced what it was to proceed to treaty without previous encouragement, was not at all consulted in this experiment. For his Majesty's principal minister declared, on the very same day, in another House, "his Majesty's deep and sincere regret at its unfortunate and abrupt termination, so different from the wishes and *hopes* that were entertained," — and in other parts of the speech speaks of this abrupt termination as a great disappointment, and as a fall from sincere endeavors and sanguine expectation. Here are, indeed, sentiments diametrically opposite, as to the hopes with which the negotiation was commenced and carried on; and what is curious is, the grounds

of the hopes on the one side and the despair on the other are exactly the same. The logical conclusion from the common premises is, indeed, in favor of the noble lord; for they are agreed that the enemy was far from giving the least degree of countenance to any such hopes, and that they proceeded in spite of every discouragement which the enemy had thrown in their way. But there is another material point in which they do not seem to differ: that is to say, the result of the desperate experiment of the noble lord, and of the promising attempt of the great minister, in satisfying the people of England, and in causing discontent to the people of France, — or, as the minister expresses it, "in uniting England and in dividing France."

For my own part, though I perfectly agreed with the noble lord that the attempt was desperate, so desperate, indeed, as to deserve *his* name of an experiment, yet no fair man can possibly doubt that the minister was perfectly sincere in his proceeding, and that, from his ardent wishes for peace with the Regicides, he was led to conceive hopes which were founded rather in his vehement desires than in any rational ground of political speculation. Convinced as I am of this, it had been better, in my humble opinion, that persons of great name and authority had abstained from those topics which had been used to call the minister's sincerity into doubt, and had not adopted the sentiments of the Directory upon the subject of all our negotiations: for the noble lord expressly says that the experiment was made for the satisfaction of the country. The Directory says exactly the same thing. Upon granting, in consequence of our supplications, the passport to Lord Malmes-

bury, in order to remove all sort of hope from its success, they charged all our previous steps, even to that moment of submissive demand to be admitted to their presence, on duplicity and perfidy, and assumed that the object of all the steps we had taken was that "of justifying the continuance of the war in the eyes of the English nation, and of throwing all the odium of it upon the French." "The English nation" (said they) "supports impatiently the continuance of the war, and *a reply must be made to its complaints and its reproaches;* the Parliament is about to be opened, *and the mouths of the orators who will declaim against the war must be shut; the demands for new taxes must be justified; and to obtain these results, it is necessary to be able to advance that the French government refuses every reasonable proposition for peace.*" I am sorry that the language of the friends to ministry and the enemies to mankind should be so much in unison.

As to the fact in which these parties are so well agreed, that the experiment ought to have been made for the satisfaction of this country, (meaning the country of England,) it were well to be wished that persons of eminence would cease to make themselves representatives of the people of England, without a letter of attorney, or any other act of procuration. In legal construction, the sense of the people of England is to be collected from the House of Commons; and though I do not deny the possibility of an abuse of this trust as well as any other, yet I think, without the most weighty reasons and in the most urgent exigencies, it is highly dangerous to suppose that the House speaks anything contrary to the sense of the people, or that the representative is silent,

when the sense of the constituent, strongly, decidedly, and upon long deliberation, speaks audibly upon any topic of moment. If there is a doubt whether the House of Commons represents perfectly the whole commons of Great Britain, (I think there is none,) there can be no question but that the Lords and the Commons together represent the sense of the whole people to the crown and to the world. Thus it is, when we speak legally and constitutionally. In a great measure it is equally true, when we speak prudentially. But I do not pretend to assert that there are no other principles to guide discretion than those which are or can be fixed by some law or some constitution: yet before the legally presumed sense of the people should be superseded by a supposition of one more real, (as in all cases where a legal presumption is to be ascertained,) some strong proofs ought to exist of a contrary disposition in the people at large, and some decisive indications of their desire upon this subject. There can be no question, that, previously to a direct message from the crown, neither House of Parliament did indicate anything like a wish for such advances as we have made or such negotiations as we have carried on. The Parliament has assented to ministry; it is not ministry that has obeyed the impulse of Parliament. The people at large have their organs through which they can speak to Parliament and to the crown by a respectful petition, and though not with absolute authority, yet with weight, they can instruct their representatives. The freeholders and other electors in this kingdom have another and a surer mode of expressing their sentiments concerning the conduct which is held by members of Parliament. In the

middle of these transactions this last opportunity has been held out to them. In all these points of view I positively assert that the people have nowhere and in no way expressed their wish of throwing themselves and their sovereign at the feet of a wicked and rancorous foe, to supplicate mercy, which, from the nature of that foe, and from the circumstances of affairs, we had no sort of ground to expect. It is undoubtedly the business of ministers very much to consult the inclinations of the people, but they ought to take great care that they do not receive that inclination from the few persons who may happen to approach them. The petty interests of such gentlemen, their low conceptions of things, their fears arising from the danger to which the very arduous and critical situation of public affairs may expose their places, their apprehensions from the hazards to which the discontents of a few popular men at elections may expose their seats in Parliament, — all these causes trouble and confuse the representations which they make to ministers of the real temper of the nation. If ministers, instead of following the great indications of the Constitution, proceed on such reports, they will take the whispers of a cabal for the voice of the people, and the counsels of imprudent timidity for the wisdom of a nation.

I well remember, that, when the fortune of the war began (and it began pretty early) to turn, as it is common and natural, we were dejected by the losses that had been sustained, and with the doubtful issue of the contests that were foreseen. But not a word was uttered that supposed peace upon any proper terms was in our power, or therefore that it should be in our desire. As usual, with or without reason,

we criticized the conduct of the war, and compared our fortunes with our measures. The mass of the nation went no further. For I suppose that you always understood me as speaking of that very preponderating part of the nation which had always been equally adverse to the French principles and to the general progress of their Revolution throughout Europe, — considering the final success of their arms and the triumph of their principles as one and the same thing.

The first means that were used, by any one professing our principles, to change the minds of this party upon that subject, appeared in a small pamphlet circulated with considerable industry. It was commonly given to the noble person himself who has passed judgment upon all hopes from negotiation, and justified our late abortive attempt only as an experiment made to satisfy the country; and yet that pamphlet led the way in endeavoring to dissatisfy that very country with the continuance of the war, and to raise in the people the most sanguine expectations from some such course of negotiation as has been fatally pursued. This leads me to suppose (and I am glad to have reason for supposing) that there was no foundation for attributing the performance in question to that author; but without mentioning his name in the title-page, it passed for his, and does still pass uncontradicted. It was entitled, "Some Remarks on the Apparent Circumstances of the War in the Fourth Week of October, 1795."

This sanguine little king's-fisher, (not prescient of the storm, as by his instinct he ought to be,) appearing at that uncertain season before the rigs of old Michaelmas were yet well composed, and when the

inclement storms of winter were approaching, began to flicker over the seas, and was busy in building its halcyon nest, as if the angry ocean had been soothed by the genial breath of May. Very unfortunately, this auspice was instantly followed by a speech from the throne in the very spirit and principles of that pamphlet.

I say nothing of the newspapers, which are undoubtedly in the interest, and which are supposed by some to be directly or indirectly under the influence of ministers, and which, with less authority than the pamphlet I speak of, had indeed for some time before held a similar language, in direct contradiction to their more early tone: insomuch that I can speak it with a certain assurance, that very many, who wished to administration as well as you and I do, thought, that, in giving their opinion in favor of this peace, they followed the opinion of ministry; — they were conscious that they did not lead it. My inference, therefore, is this: that the negotiation, whatever its merits may be, in the general principle and policy of undertaking it, is, what every political measure in general ought to be, the sole work of administration; and that, if it was an experiment to satisfy anybody, it was to satisfy those whom the ministers were in the daily habit of condemning, and by whom they were daily condemned, — I mean the *leaders* of the *opposition* in *Parliament*. I am certain that the ministers were then, and are now, invested with the fullest confidence of the major part of the nation, to pursue such measures of peace or war as the nature of things shall suggest as most adapted to the public safety. It is in this light, therefore, as a measure which ought to have been avoided and ought not to be re-

peated, that I take the liberty of discussing the merits of this system of Regicide negotiations. It is not a matter of light experiment, that leaves us where it found us. Peace or war are the great hinges upon which the very being of nations turns. Negotiations are the means of making peace or preventing war, and are therefore of more serious importance than almost any single event of war can possibly be.

At the very outset, I do not hesitate to affirm, that this country in particular, and the public law in general, have suffered more by this negotiation of experiment than by all the battles together that we have lost from the commencement of this century to this time, when it touches so nearly to its close. I therefore have the misfortune not to coincide in opinion with the great statesman who set on foot a negotiation, as he said, "in spite of the constant opposition he had met with from France." He admits, "that the difficulty in this negotiation became most seriously increased, indeed, by the situation in which we were placed, and the manner in which alone the enemy would *admit* of a negotiation." This situation so described, and so truly described, rendered our solicitation not only degrading, but from the very outset evidently hopeless.

I find it asserted, and even a merit taken for it, "that this country surmounted every difficulty of form and etiquette which the enemy had thrown in our way." An odd way of surmounting a difficulty, by cowering under it! I find it asserted that an heroic resolution had been taken, and avowed in Parliament, previous to this negotiation, "that no consideration of etiquette should stand in the way of it."

Etiquette, if I understand rightly the term, which

in any extent is of modern usage, had its original application to those ceremonial and formal observances practised at courts, which had been established by long usage, in order to preserve the sovereign power from the rude intrusion of licentious familiarity, as well as to preserve majesty itself from a disposition to consult its ease at the expense of its dignity. The term came afterwards to have a greater latitude, and to be employed to signify certain formal methods used in the transactions between sovereign states.

In the more limited, as well as in the larger sense of the term, without knowing what the etiquette is, it is impossible to determine whether it is a vain and captious punctilio, or a form necessary to preserve decorum in character and order in business. I readily admit that nothing tends to facilitate the issue of all public transactions more than a mutual disposition in the parties treating to waive all ceremony. But the use of this temporary suspension of the recognized modes of respect consists in its being mutual, and in the spirit of conciliation in which all ceremony is laid aside. On the contrary, when one of the parties to a treaty intrenches himself up to the chin in these ceremonies, and will not on his side abate a single punctilio, and that all the concessions are upon one side only, the party so conceding does by this act place himself in a relation of inferiority, and thereby fundamentally subverts that equality which is of the very essence of all treaty.

After this formal act of degradation, it was but a matter of course that gross insult should be offered to our ambassador, and that he should tamely submit to it. He found himself provoked to complain of the

atrocious libels against his public character and his person which appeared in a paper under the avowed patronage of that government. The Regicide Directory, on this complaint, did not recognize the paper: and that was all. They did not punish, they did not dismiss, they did not even reprimand the writer. As to our ambassador, this total want of reparation for the injury was passed by under the pretence of despising it.

In this but too serious business, it is not possible here to avoid a smile. Contempt is not a thing to be despised. It may be borne with a calm and equal mind, but no man by lifting his head high can pretend that he does not perceive the scorns that are poured down upon him from above. All these sudden complaints of injury, and all these deliberate submissions to it, are the inevitable consequences of the situation in which we had placed ourselves: a situation wherein the insults were such as Nature would not enable us to bear, and circumstances would not permit us to resent.

It was not long, however, after this contempt of contempt upon the part of our ambassador, (who by the way represented his sovereign,) that a new object was furnished for displaying sentiments of the same kind, though the case was infinitely aggravated. Not the ambassador, but the king himself, was libelled and insulted, — libelled, not by a creature of the Directory, but by the Directory itself. At least, so Lord Malmesbury understood it, and so he answered it in his note of the 12th November, 1796, in which he says, — "With regard to the *offensive and injurious* insinuations which are contained in that paper, and which are only calculated to throw new obstacles in

the way of the accommodation which the French government professes to desire, THE KING HAS DEEMED IT FAR BENEATH HIS DIGNITY to permit an answer to be made to them on his part, in any manner whatsoever."

I am of opinion, that, if his Majesty had kept aloof from that wash and offscouring of everything that is low and barbarous in the world, it might be well thought unworthy of his dignity to take notice of such scurrilities: they must be considered as much the natural expression of that kind of animal as it is the expression of the feelings of a dog to bark. But when the king had been advised to recognize not only the monstrous composition as a sovereign power, but, in conduct, to admit something in it like a superiority, — when the bench of Regicide was made at least coördinate with his throne, and raised upon a platform full as elevated, this treatment could not be passed by under the appearance of despising it. It would not, indeed, have been proper to keep up a war of the same kind; but an immediate, manly, and decided resentment ought to have been the consequence. We ought not to have waited for the disgraceful dismissal of our ambassador. There are cases in which we may pretend to sleep; but the wittol rule has some sense in it, *Non omnibus dormio*. We might, however, have seemed ignorant of the affront; but what was the fact? Did we dissemble or pass it by in silence? When dignity is talked of, a language which I did not expect to hear in such a transaction, I must say, what all the world must feel, that it was not for the king's dignity to notice this insult and not to resent it. This mode of proceeding is formed on new ideas of the correspondence between sovereign powers.

This was far from the only ill effect of the policy of degradation. The state of inferiority in which we were placed, in this vain attempt at treaty, drove us headlong from error into error, and led us to wander far away, not only from all the paths which have been beaten in the old course of political communication between mankind, but out of the ways even of the most common prudence. Against all rules, after we had met nothing but rebuffs in return to all our proposals, we made *two confidential communications* to those in whom we had no confidence and who reposed no confidence in us. What was worse, we were fully aware of the madness of the step we were taking. Ambassadors are not sent to a hostile power, persevering in sentiments of hostility, to make candid, confidential, and amicable communications. Hitherto the world has considered it as the duty of an ambassador in such a situation to be cautious, guarded, dexterous, and circumspect. It is true that mutual confidence and common interest dispense with all rules, smooth the rugged way, remove every obstacle, and make all things plain and level. When, in the last century, Temple and De Witt negotiated the famous Triple Alliance, their candor, their freedom, and the most *confidential* disclosures were the result of true policy. Accordingly, in spite of all the dilatory forms of the complex government of the United Provinces, the treaty was concluded in three days. It did not take a much longer time to bring the same state (that of Holland) through a still more complicated transaction, — that of the *Grand Alliance.* But in the present case, this unparalleled candor, this unpardonable want of reserve, produced, what might have been

expected from it, the most serious evils. It instructed the enemy in the whole plan of our demands and concessions. It made the most fatal discoveries.

And first, it induced us to lay down the basis of a treaty which itself had nothing to rest upon. It seems, we thought we had gained a great point in getting this basis admitted, — that is, a basis of mutual compensation and exchange of conquests. If a disposition to peace, and with any reasonable assurance, had been previously indicated, such a plan of arrangement might with propriety and safety be proposed; because these arrangements were not, in effect, to make the basis, but a part of the superstructure, of the fabric of pacification. The order of things would thus be reversed. The mutual disposition to peace would form the reasonable base, upon which the scheme of compensation upon one side or the other might be constructed. This truly fundamental base being once laid, all differences arising from the spirit of huckstering and barter might be easily adjusted. If the restoration of peace, with a view to the establishment of a fair balance of power in Europe, had been made the real basis of the treaty, the reciprocal value of the compensations could not be estimated according to their proportion to each other, but according to their proportionate relation to that end: to that great end the whole would be subservient. The effect of the treaty would be in a manner secured before the detail of particulars was begun, and for a plain reason, — because the hostile spirit on both sides had been conjured down; but if, in the full fury and unappeased rancor of war, a little traffic is attempted, it is easy to divine what must be the consequence to those who endeavor to open that kind of petty commerce.

To illustrate what I have said, I go back no further than to the two last Treaties of Paris, and to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which preceded the first of these two Treaties of Paris by about fourteen or fifteen years. I do not mean here to criticize any of them. My opinions upon some particulars of the Treaty of Paris in 1763 are published in a pamphlet* which your recollection will readily bring into your view. I recur to them only to show that their basis had not been, and never could have been, a mere dealing of truck and barter, but that the parties being willing, from common fatigue or common suffering, to put an end to a war the first object of which had either been obtained or despaired of, the lesser objects were not thought worth the price of further contest. The parties understanding one another, so much was given away without considering from whose budget it came, not as the value of the objects, but as the value of peace to the parties might require.

At the last Treaty of Paris, the subjugation of America being despaired of on the part of Great Britain, and the independence of America being looked upon as secure on the part of France, the main cause of the war was removed; and then the conquests which France had made upon us (for we had made none of importance upon her) were surrendered with sufficient facility. Peace was restored as peace. In America the parties stood as they were possessed. A limit was to be settled, but settled as a limit to secure that peace, and not at all on a system of equivalents, for which, as we then stood with the United States, there were little or no materials.

At the preceding Treaty of Paris, I mean that of

* Observations on a Late State of the Nation.

1763, there was nothing at all on which to fix a basis of compensation from reciprocal cession of conquests. They were all on one side. The question with us was not what we were to receive, and on what consideration, but what we were to keep for indemnity or to cede for peace. Accordingly, no place being left for barter, sacrifices were made on our side to peace; and we surrendered to the French their most valuable possessions in the West Indies without any equivalent. The rest of Europe fell soon after into its ancient order; and the German war ended exactly where it had begun.

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle was built upon a similar basis. All the conquests in Europe had been made by France. She had subdued the Austrian Netherlands, and broken open the gates of Holland. We had taken nothing in the West Indies; and Cape Breton was a trifling business indeed. France gave up all for peace. The Allies had given up all that was ceded at Utrecht. Louis the Fourteenth made all, or nearly all, the cessions at Ryswick, and at Nimeguen. In all those treaties, and in all the preceding, as well as in the others which intervened, the question never had been that of barter. The balance of power had been ever assumed as the known common law of Europe at all times and by all powers: the question had only been (as it must happen) on the more or less inclination of that balance.

This general balance was regarded in four principal points of view: the GREAT MIDDLE BALANCE, which comprehended Great Britain, France, and Spain; the BALANCE OF THE NORTH; the BALANCE, external and internal, of GERMANY; and the BALANCE OF ITALY. In all those systems of balance, England was the

power to whose custody it was thought it might be most safely committed.

France, as she happened to stand, secured the balance or endangered it. Without question, she had been long the security for the balance of Germany, and, under her auspices, the system, if not formed, had been at least perfected. She was so in some measure with regard to Italy, more than occasionally. She had a clear interest in the balance of the North, and had endeavored to preserve it. But when we began to treat with the present France, or, more properly, to prostrate ourselves to her, and to try if we should be admitted to ransom our allies upon a system of mutual concession and compensation, we had not one of the usual facilities. For, first, we had not the smallest indication of a desire for peace on the part of the enemy, but rather the direct contrary. Men do not make sacrifices to obtain what they do not desire: and as for the balance of power, it was so far from being admitted by France, either on the general system, or with regard to the particular systems that I have mentioned, that, in the whole body of their authorized or encouraged reports and discussions upon the theory of the diplomatic system, they constantly rejected the very idea of the balance of power, and treated it as the true cause of all the wars and calamities that had afflicted Europe; and their practice was correspondent to the dogmatic positions they had laid down. The Empire and the Papacy it was their great object to destroy; and this, now openly avowed and steadfastly acted upon, might have been discerned with very little acuteness of sight, from the very first dawnings of the Revolution, to be the main drift of their policy:

for they professed a resolution to destroy everything which can hold states together by the tie of opinion.

Exploding, therefore, all sorts of balances, they avow their design to erect themselves into a new description of empire, which is not grounded on any balance, but forms a sort of impious hierarchy, of which France is to be the head and the guardian. The law of this their empire is anything rather than the public law of Europe, the ancient conventions of its several states, or the ancient opinions which assign to them superiority or preëminence of any sort, or any other kind of connection in virtue of ancient relations. They permit, and that is all, the temporary existence of some of the old communities: but whilst they give to these tolerated states this temporary respite, in order to secure them in a condition of real dependence on themselves, they invest them on every side by a body of republics, formed on the model, and dependent ostensibly, as well as substantially, on the will of the mother republic to which they owe their origin. These are to be so many garrisons to check and control the states which are to be permitted to remain on the old model until they are ripe for a change. It is in this manner that France, on her new system, means to form an universal empire, by producing an universal revolution. By this means, forming a new code of communities according to what she calls the natural rights of man and of states, she pretends to secure eternal peace to the world, guarantied by her generosity and justice, which are to grow with the extent of her power. To talk of the balance of power to the governors of such a country was a jargon which they could not understand even through an interpreter. Before men can

transact any affair, they must have a common language to speak, and some common, recognized principles on which they can argue; otherwise all is cross purpose and confusion. It was, therefore, an essential preliminary to the whole proceeding, to fix whether the balance of power, the liberties and laws of the Empire, and the treaties of different belligerent powers in past times, when they put an end to hostilities, were to be considered as the basis of the present negotiation.

The whole of the enemy's plan was known when Lord Malmesbury was sent with his scrap of equivalents to Paris. Yet, in this unfortunate attempt at negotiation, instead of fixing these points, and assuming the balance of power and the peace of Europe as the basis to which all cessions on all sides were to be subservient, our solicitor for peace was directed to reverse that order. He was directed to make mutual concessions, on a mere comparison of their marketable value, the base of treaty. The balance of power was to be thrown in as an inducement, and a sort of make-weight to supply the manifest deficiency, which must stare him and the world in the face, between those objects which he was to require the enemy to surrender and those which he had to offer as a fair equivalent.

To give any force to this inducement, and to make it answer even the secondary purpose of equalizing equivalents having in themselves no natural proportionate value, it supposed that the enemy, contrary to the most notorious fact, did admit this balance of power to be of some value, great or small; whereas it is plain, that, in the enemy's estimate of things, the consideration of the balance of power, as

we have said before, was so far from going in diminution of the value of what the Directory was desired to surrender, or of giving an additional price to our objects offered in exchange, that the hope of the utter destruction of that balance became a new motive to the junto of Regicides for preserving, as a means for realizing that hope, what we wished them to abandon.

Thus stood the basis of the treaty, on laying the first stone of the foundation. At the very best, upon our side, the question stood upon a mere naked bargain and sale. Unthinking people here triumphed, when they thought they had obtained it; whereas, when obtained as a basis of a treaty, it was just the worst we could possibly have chosen. As to our offer to cede a most unprofitable, and, indeed, beggarly, chargeable counting-house or two in the East Indies, we ought not to presume that they would consider this as anything else than a mockery. As to anything of real value, we had nothing under heaven to offer, (for which we were not ourselves in a very dubious struggle,) except the island of Martinico only. When this object was to be weighed against the Directorial conquests, merely as an object of a value at market, the principle of barter became perfectly ridiculous: a single quarter in the single city of Amsterdam was worth ten Martinicos, and would have sold for many more years' purchase in any market overt in Europe. How was this gross and glaring defect in the objects of exchange to be supplied? It was to be made up by argument. And what was that argument? The extreme utility of possessions in the West Indies to the augmentation of the naval power of France. A very curious topic

of argument to be proposed and insisted on by an ambassador of Great Britain! It is directly and plainly this: — "Come, we know that of all things you wish a naval power, and it is natural you should, who wish to destroy the very sources of the British greatness, to overpower our marine, to destroy our commerce, to eradicate our foreign influence, and to lay us open to an invasion, which at one stroke may complete our servitude and ruin and expunge us from among the nations of the earth. Here I have it in my budget, the infallible arcanum for that purpose. You are but novices in the art of naval resources. Let you have the West Indies back, and your maritime preponderance is secured, for which you would do well to be moderate in your demands upon the Austrian Netherlands."

Under any circumstances, this is a most extraordinary topic of argument; but it is rendered by much the more unaccountable, when we are told, that, if the war has been diverted from the great object of establishing society and good order in Europe by destroying the usurpation in France, this diversion was made to increase the naval resources and power of Great Britain, and to lower, if not annihilate, those of the marine of France. I leave all this to the very serious reflection of every Englishman.

This basis was no sooner admitted than the rejection of a treaty upon that sole foundation was a thing of course. The enemy did not think it worthy of a discussion, as in truth it was not; and immediately, as usual, they began, in the most opprobrious and most insolent manner, to question our sincerity and good faith: whereas, in truth, there was no one symptom wanting of openness and fair dealing. What

could be more fair than to lay open to an enemy all that you wished to obtain, and the price you meant to pay for it, and to desire him to imitate your ingenuous proceeding, and in the same manner to open his honest heart to you? Here was no want of fair dealing, but there was too evidently a fault of another kind: there was much weakness, — there was an eager and impotent desire of associating with this unsocial power, and of attempting the connection by any means, however manifestly feeble and ineffectual. The event was committed to chance, — that is, to such a manifestation of the desire of France for peace as would induce the Directory to forget the advantages they had in the system of barter. Accordingly, the general desire for such a peace was triumphantly reported from the moment that Lord Malmesbury had set his foot on shore at Calais.

It has been said that the Directory was compelled against its will to accept the basis of barter (as if that had tended to accelerate the work of pacification!) by the voice of all France. Had this been the case, the Directors would have continued to listen to that voice to which it seems they were so obedient: they would have proceeded with the negotiation upon that basis. But the fact is, that they instantly broke up the negotiation, as soon as they had obliged our ambassador to violate all the principles of treaty, and weakly, rashly, and unguardedly to expose, without any counter proposition, the whole of our project with regard to ourselves and our allies, and without holding out the smallest hope that they would admit the smallest part of our pretensions.

When they had thus drawn from us all that they could draw out, they expelled Lord Malmesbury, and

they appealed, for the propriety of their conduct, to that very France which we thought proper to suppose had driven them to this fine concession: and I do not find that in either division of the family of thieves, the younger branch, or the elder, or in any other body whatsoever, there was any indignation excited, or any tumult raised, or anything like the virulence of opposition which was shown to the king's ministers here, on account of that transaction.

Notwithstanding all this, it seems a hope is still entertained that the Directory will have that tenderness for the carcass of their country, by whose very distemper, and on whose festering wounds, like vermin, they are fed, that these pious patriots will of themselves come into a more moderate and reasonable way of thinking and acting. In the name of wonder, what has inspired our ministry with this hope any more than with their former expectations?

Do these hopes only arise from continual disappointment? Do they grow out of the usual grounds of despair? What is there to encourage them, in the conduct or even in the declarations of the ruling powers in France, from the first formation of their mischievous republic to the hour in which I write? Is not the Directory composed of the same junto? Are they not the identical men who, from the base and sordid vices which belonged to their original place and situation, aspired to the dignity of crimes, — and from the dirtiest, lowest, most fraudulent, and most knavish of chicaners, ascended in the scale of robbery, sacrilege, and assassination in all its forms, till at last they had imbrued their impious hands in the blood of their sovereign? Is it from these men that we are to hope for this paternal tenderness to their country,

and this sacred regard for the peace and happiness of all nations?

But it seems there is still another lurking hope, akin to that which duped us so egregiously before, when our delightful basis was accepted: we still flatter ourselves that the public voice of France will compel this Directory to more moderation. Whence does this hope arise? What public voice is there in France? There are, indeed, some writers, who, since this monster of a Directory has obtained a great, regular, military force to guard them, are indulged in a sufficient liberty of writing; and some of them write well, undoubtedly. But the world knows that in France there is no public, — that the country is composed but of two descriptions, audacious tyrants and trembling slaves. The contests between the tyrants is the only vital principle that can be discerned in France. The only thing which there appears like spirit is amongst their late associates, and fastest friends of the Directory, — the more furious and untamable part of the Jacobins. This discontented member of the faction does almost balance the reigning divisions, and it threatens every moment to predominate. For the present, however, the dread of their fury forms some sort of security to their fellows, who now exercise a more regular and therefore a somewhat less ferocious tyranny. Most of the slaves choose a quiet, however reluctant, submission to those who are somewhat satiated with blood, and who, like wolves, are a little more tame from being a little less hungry, in preference to an irruption of the famished devourers who are prowling and howling about the fold.

This circumstance assures some degree of perma-

nence to the power of those whom we know to be permanently our rancorous and implacable enemies. But to those very enemies who have sworn our destruction we have ourselves given a further and far better security, by rendering the cause of the royalists desperate. Those brave and virtuous, but unfortunate adherents to the ancient Constitution of their country, after the miserable slaughters which have been made in that body, after all their losses by emigration, are still numerous, but unable to exert themselves against the force of the usurpation evidently countenanced and upheld by those very princes who had called them to arm for the support of the legal monarchy. Where, then, after chasing these fleeting hopes of ours from point to point of the political horizon, are they at last really found? Not where, under Providence, the hopes of Englishmen used to be placed, in our own courage and in our own virtues, but in the moderation and virtue of the most atrocious monsters that have ever disgraced and plagued mankind.

The only excuse to be made for all our mendicant diplomacy is the same as in the case of all other mendicancy, namely, that it has been founded on absolute necessity. This deserves consideration. Necessity, as it has no law, so it has no shame. But moral necessity is not like metaphysical, or even physical. In that category it is a word of loose signification, and conveys different ideas to different minds. To the low-minded, the slightest necessity becomes an invincible necessity. "The slothful man saith, There is a lion in the way, and I shall be devoured in the streets." But when the necessity pleaded is not in the nature of things, but in the vices of him who

alleges it, the whining tones of commonplace beggarly rhetoric produce nothing but indignation: because they indicate a desire of keeping up a dishonorable existence, without utility to others, and without dignity to itself; because they aim at obtaining the dues of labor without industry, and by frauds would draw from the compassion of others what men ought to owe to their own spirit and their own exertions.

I am thoroughly satisfied, that, if we degrade ourselves, it is the degradation which will subject us to the yoke of necessity, and not that it is necessity which has brought on our degradation. In this same chaos, where light and darkness are struggling together, the open subscription of last year, with all its circumstances, must have given us no little glimmering of hope: not (as I have heard it was vainly discoursed) that the loan could prove a crutch to a lame negotiation abroad, and that the whiff and wind of it must at once have disposed the enemies of all tranquillity to a desire for peace. Judging on the face of facts, if on them it had any effect at all, it had the direct contrary effect; for very soon after the loan became public at Paris, the negotiation ended, and our ambassador was ignominiously expelled. My view of this was different: I liked the loan, not from the influence which it might have on the enemy, but on account of the temper which it indicated in our own people. This alone is a consideration of any importance; because all calculation formed upon a supposed relation of the habitudes of others to our own, under the present circumstances, is weak and fallacious. The adversary must be judged, not by what we are, or by what we wish him to be, but by what we must know he actually is: unless we choose

to shut our eyes and our ears to the uniform tenor of all his discourses, and to his uniform course in all his actions. We may be deluded; but we cannot pretend that we have been disappointed. The old rule of *Ne te quæsiveris extra* is a precept as available in policy as it is in morals. Let us leave off speculating upon the disposition and the wants of the enemy. Let us descend into our own bosoms; let us ask ourselves what are our duties, and what are our means of discharging them. In what heart are you at home? How far may an English minister confide in the affections, in the confidence, in the force of an English people? What does he find us, when he puts us to the proof of what English interest and English honor demand? It is as furnishing an answer to these questions that I consider the circumstances of the loan. The effect on the enemy is not in what he may speculate on our resources, but in what he shall feel from our arms.

The circumstances of the loan have proved beyond a doubt three capital points, which, if they are properly used, may be advantageous to the future liberty and happiness of mankind. In the first place, the loan demonstrates, in regard to instrumental resources, the competency of this kingdom to the assertion of the common cause, and to the maintenance and superintendence of that which it is its duty and its glory to hold and to watch over, — the balance of power throughout the Christian world. Secondly, it brings to light what, under the most discouraging appearances, I always reckoned on: that, with its ancient physical force, not only unimpaired, but augmented, its ancient spirit is still alive in the British nation. It proves that for their application there is

a spirit equal to the resources, for its energy above them. It proves that there exists, though not always visible, a spirit which never fails to come forth, whenever it is ritually invoked,—a spirit which will give no equivocal response, but such as will hearten the timidity and fix the irresolution of hesitating prudence,—a spirit which will be ready to perform all the tasks that shall be imposed upon it by public honor. Thirdly, the loan displays an abundant confidence in his Majesty's government, as administered by his present servants, in the prosecution of a war which the people consider, not as a war made on the suggestion of ministers, and to answer the purposes of the ambition or pride of statesmen, but as a war of their own, and in defence of that very property which they expend for its support,—a war for that order of things from which everything valuable that they possess is derived, and in which order alone it can possibly be maintained.

I hear, in derogation of the value of the fact from which I draw inferences so favorable to the spirit of the people and to its just expectation from ministers, that the eighteen million loan is to be considered in no other light than as taking advantage of a very lucrative bargain held out to the subscribers. I do not in truth believe it. All the circumstances which attended the subscription strongly spoke a different language. Be it, however, as these detractors say. This with me derogates little, or rather nothing at all, from the political value and importance of the fact. I should be very sorry, if the transaction was not such a bargain; otherwise it would not have been a fair one. A corrupt and improvident loan, like everything else corrupt or prodigal, cannot be too much

condemned; but there is a short-sighted parsimony still more fatal than an unforeseeing expense. The value of money must be judged, like everything else, from its rate at market. To force that market, or any market, is of all things the most dangerous. For a small temporary benefit, the spring of all public credit might be relaxed forever. The moneyed men have a right to look to advantage in the investment of their property. To advance their money, they risk it; and the risk is to be included in the price. If they were to incur a loss, that loss would amount to a tax on that peculiar species of property. In effect, it would be the most unjust and impolitic of all things, — unequal taxation. It would throw upon one description of persons in the community that burden which ought by fair and equitable distribution to rest upon the whole. None on account of their dignity should be exempt; none (preserving due proportion) on account of the scantiness of their means. The moment a man is exempted from the maintenance of the community, he is in a sort separated from it, — he loses the place of a citizen.

So it is in all *taxation*. But in a *bargain*, when terms of loss are looked for by the borrower from the lender, compulsion, or what virtually is compulsion, introduces itself into the place of treaty. When compulsion may be at all used by a state in borrowing the occasion must determine. But the compulsion ought to be known, and well defined, and well distinguished; for otherwise treaty only weakens the energy of compulsion, while compulsion destroys the freedom of a bargain. The advantage of both is lost by the confusion of things in their nature utterly unsociable. It would be to introduce compulsion into

that in which freedom and existence are the same: I mean credit. The moment that shame or fear or force are directly or indirectly applied to a loan, credit perishes.

There must be some impulse, besides public spirit, to put private interest into motion along with it. Moneyed men ought to be allowed to set a value on their money: if they did not, there could be no moneyed men. This desire of accumulation is a principle without which the means of their service to the state could not exist. The love of lucre, though sometimes carried to a ridiculous, sometimes to a vicious excess, is the grand cause of prosperity to all states. In this natural, this reasonable, this powerful, this prolific principle, it is for the satirist to expose the ridiculous, — it is for the moralist to censure the vicious, — it is for the sympathetic heart to reprobate the hard and cruel, — it is for the judge to animadvert on the fraud, the extortion, and the oppression; but it is for the statesman to employ it as he finds it, with all its concomitant excellencies, with all its imperfections on its head. It is his part, in this case, as it is in all other cases, where he is to make use of the general energies of Nature, to take them as he finds them.

After all, it is a great mistake to imagine, as too commonly, almost indeed generally, it is imagined, that the public borrower and the private lender are two adverse parties, with different and contending interests, and that what is given to the one is wholly taken from the other. Constituted as our system of finance and taxation is, the interests of the contracting parties cannot well be separated, whatever they may reciprocally intend. He who is the hard lender of to-

day to-morrow is the generous contributor to his own payment. For example, the last loan is raised on public taxes, which are designed to produce annually two millions sterling. At first view, this is an annuity of two millions dead charge upon the public in favor of certain moneyed men; but inspect the thing more nearly, follow the stream in its meanders, and you will find that there is a good deal of fallacy in this state of things.

I take it, that whoever considers any man's expenditure of his income, old or new, (I speak of certain classes in life,) will find a full third of it to go in taxes, direct or indirect. If so, this new-created income of two millions will probably furnish 665,000*l.* (I avoid broken numbers) towards the payment of its own interest, or to the sinking of its own capital. So it is with the whole of the public debt. Suppose it any given sum, it is a fallacious estimate of the affairs of a nation to consider it as a mere burden. To a degree it is so without question, but not wholly so, nor anything like it. If the income from the interest be spent, the above proportion returns again into the public stock; insomuch that, taking the interest of the whole debt to be twelve million three hundred thousand pound, (it is something more,) not less than a sum of four million one hundred thousand pound comes back again to the public through the channel of imposition. If the whole or any part of that income be saved, so much new capital is generated, — the infallible operation of which is to lower the value of money, and consequently to conduce towards the improvement of public credit.

I take the expenditure of the *capitalist*, not the

value of the capital, as my standard; because it is the standard upon which, amongst us, property, as an object of taxation, is rated. In this country, land and offices only excepted, we raise no faculty tax. We preserve the faculty from the expense. Our taxes, for the far greater portion, fly over the heads of the lowest classes. They escape too, who, with better ability, voluntarily subject themselves to the harsh discipline of a rigid necessity. With us, labor and frugality, the parents of riches, are spared, and wisely too. The moment men cease to augment the common stock, the moment they no longer enrich it by their industry or their self-denial, their luxury and even their ease are obliged to pay contribution to the public; not because they are vicious principles, but because they are unproductive. If, in fact, the interest paid by the public had not thus revolved again into its own fund, if this secretion had not again been absorbed into the mass of blood, it would have been impossible for the nation to have existed to this time under such a debt. But under the debt it does exist and flourish; and this flourishing state of existence in no small degree is owing to the contribution from the debt to the payment. Whatever, therefore, is taken from that capital by too close a bargain is but a delusive advantage: it is so much lost to the public in another way. This matter cannot, on the one side or the other, be metaphysically pursued to the extreme; but it is a consideration of which, in all discussions of this kind, we ought never wholly to lose sight.

It is never, therefore, wise to quarrel with the interested views of men, whilst they are combined with the public interest and promote it: it is our business

to tie the knot, if possible, closer. Resources that are derived from extraordinary virtues, as such virtues are rare, so they must be unproductive. It is a good thing for a moneyed man to pledge his property on the welfare of his country: he shows that he places his treasure where his heart is; and revolving in this circle, we know, that, "wherever a man's treasure is, there his heart will be also." For these reasons, and on these principles, I have been sorry to see the attempts which have been made, with more good meaning than foresight and consideration, towards raising the annual interest of this loan by private contributions. Wherever a regular revenue is established, there voluntary contribution can answer no purpose but to disorder and disturb it in its course. To recur to such aids is, for so much, to dissolve the community, and to return to a state of unconnected Nature. And even if such a supply should be productive in a degree commensurate to its object, it must also be productive of much vexation and much oppression. Either the citizens by the proposed duties pay their proportion according to some rate made by public authority, or they do not. If the law be well made, and the contributions founded on just proportions, everything superadded by something that is not as regular as law, and as uniform in its operation, will become more or less out of proportion. If, on the contrary, the law be not made upon proper calculation, it is a disgrace to the public wisdom, which fails in skill to assess the citizen in just measure and according to his means. But the hand of authority is not always the most heavy hand. It is obvious that men may be oppressed by many ways besides those which take

their course from the supreme power of the state. Suppose the payment to be wholly discretionary. Whatever has its origin in caprice is sure not to improve in its progress, nor to end in reason. It is impossible for each private individual to have any measure conformable to the particular condition of each of his fellow-citizens, or to the general exigencies of his country. 'T is a random shot at best.

When men proceed in this irregular mode, the first contributor is apt to grow peevish with his neighbors. He is but too well disposed to measure their means by his own envy, and not by the real state of their fortunes, which he can rarely know, and which it may in them be an act of the grossest imprudence to reveal. Hence the odium and lassitude with which people will look upon a provision for the public which is bought by discord at the expense of social quiet. Hence the bitter heart-burnings, and the war of tongues, which is so often the prelude to other wars. Nor is it every contribution, called voluntary, which is according to the free will of the giver. A false shame, or a false glory, against his feelings and his judgment, may tax an individual to the detriment of his family and in wrong of his creditors. A pretence of public spirit may disable him from the performance of his private duties; it may disable him even from paying the legitimate contributions which he is to furnish according to the prescript of law. But what is the most dangerous of all is that malignant disposition to which this mode of contribution evidently tends, and which at length leaves the comparatively indigent to judge of the wealth, and to prescribe to the opulent, or those whom they conceive to be such, the use they are to make of their

fortunes. From thence it is but one step to the subversion of all property.

Far, very far, am I from supposing that such things enter into the purposes of those excellent persons whose zeal has led them to this kind of measure; but the measure itself will lead them beyond their intention, and what is begun with the best designs bad men will perversely improve to the worst of their purposes. An ill-founded plausibility in great affairs is a real evil. In France we have seen the wickedest and most foolish of men, the constitution-mongers of 1789, pursuing this very course, and ending in this very event. These projectors of deception set on foot two modes of voluntary contribution to the state. The first they called patriotic gifts. These, for the greater part, were not more ridiculous in the mode than contemptible in the project. The other, which they called the patriotic contribution, was expected to amount to a fourth of the fortunes of individuals, but at their own will and on their own estimate; but this contribution threatening to fall infinitely short of their hopes, they soon made it compulsory, both in the rate and in the levy, beginning in fraud, and ending, as all the frauds of power end, in plain violence. All these devices to produce an involuntary will were under the pretext of relieving the more indigent classes; but the principle of voluntary contribution, however delusive, being once established, these lower classes first, and then all classes, were encouraged to throw off the regular, methodical payments to the state, as so many badges of slavery. Thus all regular revenue failing, these impostors, raising the superstructure on the same cheats with which they had laid the founda-

tion of their greatness, and not content with a portion of the possessions of the rich, confiscated the whole, and, to prevent them from reclaiming their rights, murdered the proprietors. The whole of the process has passed before our eyes, and been conducted, indeed, with a greater degree of rapidity than could be expected.

My opinion, then, is, that public contributions ought only to be raised by the public will. By the judicious form of our Constitution, the public contribution is in its name and substance a grant. In its origin it is truly voluntary: not voluntary according to the irregular, unsteady, capricious will of individuals, but according to the will and wisdom of the whole popular mass, in the only way in which will and wisdom can go together. This voluntary grant obtaining in its progress the force of a law, a general necessity, which takes away all merit, and consequently all jealousy from individuals, compresses, equalizes, and satisfies the whole, suffering no man to judge of his neighbor or to arrogate anything to himself. If their will complies with their obligation, the great end is answered in the happiest mode; if the will resists the burden, every one loses a great part of his own will as a common lot. After all, perhaps, contributions raised by a charge on luxury, or that degree of convenience which approaches so near as to be confounded with luxury, is the only mode of contribution which may be with truth termed voluntary.

I might rest here, and take the loan I speak of as leading to a solution of that question which I proposed in my first letter: "Whether the inability of the country to prosecute the war did necessitate a

submission to the indignities and the calamities of a peace with the Regicide power?" But give me leave to pursue this point a little further.

I know that it has been a cry usual on this occasion, as it has been upon occasions where such a cry could have less apparent justification, that great distress and misery have been the consequence of this war, by the burdens brought and laid upon the people. But to know where the burden really lies, and where it presses, we must divide the people. As to the common people, their stock is in their persons and in their earnings. I deny that the stock of their persons is diminished in a greater proportion than the common sources of populousness abundantly fill up: I mean constant employment; proportioned pay according to the produce of the soil, and, where the soil fails, according to the operation of the general capital; plentiful nourishment to vigorous labor; comfortable provision to decrepit age, to orphan infancy, and to accidental malady. I say nothing to the policy of the provision for the poor, in all the variety of faces under which it presents itself. This is the matter of another inquiry. I only just speak of it as of a fact, taken with others, to support me in my denial that hitherto any one of the ordinary sources of the increase of mankind is dried up by this war. I affirm, what I can well prove, that the waste has been less than the supply. To say that in war no man must be killed is to say that there ought to be no war. This they may say who wish to talk idly, and who would display their humanity at the expense of their honesty or their understanding. If more lives are lost in this war than necessity requires, they are lost by misconduct or mistake; but if the hostility be

just, the error is to be corrected, the war is not to be abandoned.

That the stock of the common people, in numbers, is not lessened, any more than the causes are impaired, is manifest, without being at the pains of an actual numeration. An improved and improving agriculture, which implies a great augmentation of labor, has not yet found itself at a stand, no, not for a single moment, for want of the necessary hands, either in the settled progress of husbandry or in the occasional pressure of harvests. I have even reason to believe that there has been a much smaller importation, or the demand of it, from a neighboring kingdom, than in former times, when agriculture was more limited in its extent and its means, and when the time was a season of profound peace. On the contrary, the prolific fertility of country life has poured its superfluity of population into the canals, and into other public works, which of late years have been undertaken to so amazing an extent, and which have not only not been discontinued, but, beyond all expectation, pushed on with redoubled vigor, in a war that calls for so many of our men and so much of our riches. An increasing capital calls for labor, and an increasing population answers to the call. Our manufactures, augmented both for the supply of foreign and domestic consumption, reproducing, with the means of life, the multitudes which they use and waste, (and which many of them devour much more surely and much more largely than the war,) have always found the laborious hand ready for the liberal pay. That the price of the soldier is highly raised is true. In part this rise may be owing to some measures not so well considered in the beginning of

this war; but the grand cause has been the reluctance of that class of people from whom the soldiery is taken to enter into a military life, — not that, but, once entered into, it has its conveniences, and even its pleasures. I have seldom known a soldier who, at the intercession of his friends, and at their no small charge, had been redeemed from that discipline, that in a short time was not eager to return to it again. But the true reason is the abundant occupation and the augmented stipend found in towns and villages and farms, which leaves a smaller number of persons to be disposed of. The price of men for new and untried ways of life must bear a proportion to the profits of that mode of existence from whence they are to be bought.

So far as to the stock of the common people, as it consists in their persons. As to the other part, which consists in their earnings, I have to say, that the rates of wages are very greatly augmented almost through the kingdom. In the parish where I live it has been raised from seven to nine shillings in the week, for the same laborer, performing the same task, and no greater. Except something in the malt taxes and the duties upon sugars, I do not know any one tax imposed for very many years past which affects the laborer in any degree whatsoever; while, on the other hand, the tax upon houses not having more than seven windows (that is, upon cottages) was repealed the very year before the commencement of the present war. On the whole, I am satisfied that the humblest class, and that class which touches the most nearly on the lowest, out of which it is continually emerging, and to which it is continually falling, receives far more from public impositions than it pays.

That class receives two million sterling annually from the classes above it. It pays to no such amount towards any public contribution.

I hope it is not necessary for me to take notice of that language, so ill suited to the persons to whom it has been attributed, and so unbecoming the place in which it is said to have been uttered, concerning the present war as the cause of the high price of provisions during the greater part of the year 1796. I presume it is only to be ascribed to the intolerable license with which the newspapers break not only the rules of decorum in real life, but even the dramatic decorum, when they personate great men, and, like bad poets, make the heroes of the piece talk more like us Grub-Street scribblers than in a style consonant to persons of gravity and importance in the state. It was easy to demonstrate the cause, and the sole cause, of that rise in the grand article and first necessary of life. It would appear that it had no more connection with the war than the moderate price to which all sorts of grain were reduced, soon after the return of Lord Malmesbury, had with the state of politics and the fate of his Lordship's treaty. I have quite as good reason (that is, no reason at all) to attribute this abundance to the longer continuance of the war as the gentlemen who personate leading members of Parliament have had for giving the enhanced price to that war, at a more early period of its duration. Oh, the folly of us poor creatures, who, in the midst of our distresses or our escapes, are ready to claw or caress one another, upon matters that so seldom depend on our wisdom or our weakness, on our good or evil conduct towards each other!

An untimely shower or an unseasonable drought,

a frost too long continued or too suddenly broken up with rain and tempest, the blight of the spring or the smut of the harvest will do more to cause the distress of the belly than all the contrivances of all statesmen can do to relieve it. Let government protect and encourage industry, secure property, repress violence, and discountenance fraud, it is all that they have to do. In other respects, the less they meddle in these affairs, the better; the rest is in the hands of our Master and theirs. We are in a constitution of things wherein "*modo sol nimius, modo corripit imber.*" — But I will push this matter no further. As I have said a good deal upon it at various times during my public service, and have lately written something on it, which may yet see the light, I shall content myself now with observing that the vigorous and laborious class of life has lately got, from the *bon-ton* of the humanity of this day, the name of the "*laboring poor.*" We have heard many plans for the relief of the "*laboring poor.*" This puling jargon is not as innocent as it is foolish. In meddling with great affairs, weakness is never innoxious. Hitherto the name of poor (in the sense in which it is used to excite compassion) has not been used for those who can, but for those who cannot labor, — for the sick and infirm, for orphan infancy, for languishing and decrepit age; but when we affect to pity, as poor, those who must labor or the world cannot exist, we are trifling with the condition of mankind. It is the common doom of man, that he must eat his bread by the sweat of his brow, — that is, by the sweat of his body or the sweat of his mind. If this toil was inflicted as a curse, it is, as might be expected, from the curses of the Father of all blessings; it is tempered with many alleviations,

many comforts. Every attempt to fly from it, and to refuse the very terms of our existence, becomes much more truly a curse; and heavier pains and penalties fall upon those who would elude the tasks which are put upon them by the great Master Workman of the world, who, in His dealings with His creatures, sympathizes with their weakness, and, speaking of a creation wrought by mere will out of nothing, speaks of six days of *labor* and one of *rest*. I do not call a healthy young man, cheerful in his mind and vigorous in his arms, I cannot call such a man *poor;* I cannot pity my kind as a kind, merely because they are men. This affected pity only tends to dissatisfy them with their condition, and to teach them to seek resources where no resources are to be found, in something else than their own industry and frugality and sobriety. Whatever may be the intention (which, because I do not know, I cannot dispute) of those who would discontent mankind by this strange pity, they act towards us, in the consequences, as if they were our worst enemies.

In turning our view from the lower to the higher classes, it will not be necessary for me to show at any length that the stock of the latter, as it consists in their numbers, has not yet suffered any material diminution. I have not seen or heard it asserted; I have no reason to believe it: there is no want of officers, that I have ever understood, for the new ships which we commission, or the new regiments which we raise. In the nature of things, it is not with their persons that the higher classes principally pay their contingent to the demands of war. There is another, and not less important part, which rests with almost exclusive weight upon them. They furnish the means

> "how War may, best upheld,
> Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
> In all her equipage."

Not that they are exempt from contributing also by their personal service in the fleets and armies of their country. They do contribute, and in their full and fair proportion, according to the relative proportion of their numbers in the community. They contribute all the mind that actuates the whole machine. The fortitude required of them is very different from the unthinking alacrity of the common soldier or common sailor in the face of danger and death: it is not a passion, it is not an impulse, it is not a sentiment; it is a cool, steady, deliberate principle, always present, always equable, — having no connection with anger, — tempering honor with prudence, — incited, invigorated, and sustained by a generous love of fame, — informed, moderated, and directed by an enlarged knowledge of its own great public ends, — flowing in one blended stream from the opposite sources of the heart and the head, — carrying in itself its own commission, and proving its title to every other command by the first and most difficult command, that of the bosom in which it resides: it is a fortitude which unites with the courage of the field the more exalted and refined courage of the council, — which knows as well to retreat as to advance, — which can conquer as well by delay as by the rapidity of a march or the impetuosity of an attack, — which can be, with Fabius, the black cloud that lowers on the tops of the mountains, or, with Scipio, the thunderbolt of war, — which, undismayed by false shame, can patiently endure the severest trial that a gallant spirit can undergo, in the taunts

and provocations of the enemy, the suspicions, the cold respect, and "mouth honor" of those from whom it should meet a cheerful obedience, — which, undisturbed by false humanity, can calmly assume that most awful moral responsibility of deciding when victory may be too dearly purchased by the loss of a single life, and when the safety and glory of their country may demand the certain sacrifice of thousands. Different stations of command may call for different modifications of this fortitude, but the character ought to be the same in all. And never, in the most "palmy state" of our martial renown, did it shine with brighter lustre than in the present sanguinary and ferocious hostilities, wherever the British arms have been carried. But in this most arduous and momentous conflict, which from its nature should have roused us to new and unexampled efforts, I know not how it has been that we have never put forth half the strength which we have exerted in ordinary wars. In the fatal battles which have drenched the Continent with blood and shaken the system of Europe to pieces, we have never had any considerable army, of a magnitude to be compared to the least of those by which in former times we so gloriously asserted our place as protectors, not oppressors, at the head of the great commonwealth of Europe. We have never manfully met the danger in front; and when the enemy, resigning to us our natural dominion of the ocean, and abandoning the defence of his distant possessions to the infernal energy of the destroying principles which he had planted there for the subversion of the neighboring colonies, drove forth, by one sweeping law of unprecedented despotism, his armed multitudes on every side, to

overwhelm the countries and states which had for centuries stood the firm barriers against the ambition of France, we drew back the arm of our military force, which had never been more than half raised to oppose him. From that time we have been combating only with the other arm of our naval power, — the right arm of England, I admit, — but which struck almost unresisted, with blows that could never reach the heart of the hostile mischief. From that time, without a single effort to regain those outworks which ever till now we so strenuously maintained, as the strong frontier of our own dignity and safety no less than the liberties of Europe, — with but one feeble attempt to succor those brave, faithful, and numerous allies, whom, for the first time since the days of our Edwards and Henrys, we now have in the bosom of France itself, — we have been intrenching and fortifying and garrisoning ourselves at home, we have been redoubling security on security to protect ourselves from invasion, which has now first become to us a serious object of alarm and terror. Alas! the few of us who have protracted life in any measure near to the extreme limits of our short period have been condemned to see strange things, — new systems of policy, new principles, and not only new men, but what might appear a new species of men. I believe that any person who was of age to take a part in public affairs forty years ago (if the intermediate space of time were expunged from his memory) would hardly credit his senses, when he should hear from the highest authority that an army of two hundred thousand men was kept up in this island, and that in the neighboring island there were at least fourscore thousand more. But when he had recov-

ered from his surprise on being told of this army, which has not its parallel, what must be his astonishment to be told again that this mighty force was kept up for the mere purpose of an inert and passive defence, and that in its far greater part it was disabled by its constitution and very essence from defending us against an enemy by any one preventive stroke or any one operation of active hostility? What must his reflections be, on learning further, that a fleet of five hundred men of war, the best appointed, and to the full as ably commanded as this country ever had upon the sea, was for the greater part employed in carrying on the same system of unenterprising defence? What must be the sentiments and feelings of one who remembers the former energy of England, when he is given to understand that these two islands, with their extensive and everywhere vulnerable coast, should be considered as a garrisoned sea-town? What would such a man, what would any man think, if the garrison of so strange a fortress should be such, and so feebly commanded, as never to make a sally, — and that, contrary to all which has hitherto been seen in war, an infinitely inferior army, with the shattered relics of an almost annihilated navy, ill-found and ill-manned, may with safety besiege this superior garrison, and, without hazarding the life of a man, ruin the place, merely by the menaces and false appearances of an attack? Indeed, indeed, my dear friend, I look upon this matter of our defensive system as much the most important of all considerations at this moment. It has oppressed me with many anxious thoughts, which, more than any bodily distemper, have sunk me to the condition in which you

know that I am. Should it please Providence tc restore to me even the late weak remains of my strength, I propose to make this matter the subject of a particular discussion. I only mean here to ar gue, that the mode of conducting the war on our part, be it good or bad, has prevented even the common havoc of war in our population, and especially among that class whose duty and privilege of superiority it is to lead the way amidst the perils and slaughter of the field of battle.

The other causes which sometimes affect the numbers of the lower classes, but which I have shown not to have existed to any such degree during this war, — penury, cold, hunger, nakedness, — do not easily reach the higher orders of society. I do not dread for them the slightest taste of these calamities from the distress and pressure of the war. They have much more to dread in that way from the confiscations, the rapines, the burnings, and the massacres that may follow in the train of a peace which shall establish the devastating and depopulating principles and example of the French Regicides in security and triumph and dominion. In the ordinary course of human affairs, any check to population among men in ease and opulence is less to be apprehended from what they may suffer than from what they enjoy. Peace is more likely to be injurious to them in that respect than war. The excesses of delicacy, repose, and satiety are as unfavorable as the extremes of hardship, toil, and want to the increase and multiplication of our kind. Indeed, the abuse of the bounties of Nature, much more surely than any partial privation of them, tends to intercept that precious boon of a second

and dearer life in our progeny, which was bestowed in the first great command to man from the All-Gracious Giver of all, — whose name be blessed, whether He gives or takes away! His hand, in every page of His book, has written the lesson of moderation. Our physical well-being, our moral worth, our social happiness, our political tranquillity, all depend on that control of all our appetites and passions which the ancients designed by the cardinal virtue of *temperance.*

The only real question to our present purpose, with regard to the higher classes, is, How stands the account of their stock, as it consists in wealth of every description? Have the burdens of the war compelled them to curtail any part of their former expenditure? — which, I have before observed, affords the only standard of estimating property as an object of taxation. Do they enjoy all the same conveniences, the same comforts, the same elegancies, the same luxuries, in the same or in as many different modes as they did before the war?

In the last eleven years there have been no less than three solemn inquiries into the finances of the kingdom, by three different committees of your House. The first was in the year 1786. On that occasion, I remember, the report of the committee was examined, and sifted and bolted to the bran, by a gentleman whose keen and powerful talents I have ever admired. He thought there was not sufficient evidence to warrant the pleasing representation which the committee had made of our national prosperity. He did not believe that our public revenue could continue to be so productive as they had assumed. He even went the length of recording his own inferences of doubt in a set of resolutions which now

stand upon your journals. And perhaps the retrospect on which the report proceeded did not go far enough back to allow any sure and satisfactory average for a ground of solid calculation. But what was the event? When the next committee sat, in 1791, they found, that, on an average of the last four years, their predecessors had fallen short, in their estimate of the permanent taxes, by more than three hundred and forty thousand pounds a year. Surely, then, if I can show, that, in the produce of those same taxes, and more particularly of such as affect articles of luxurious use and consumption, the four years of the war have equalled those four years of peace, flourishing as they were beyond the most sanguine speculations, I may expect to hear no more of the distress occasioned by the war.

The additional burdens which have been laid on some of those same articles might reasonably claim some allowance to be made. Every new advance of the price to the consumer is a new incentive to him to retrench the quantity of his consumption; and if, upon the whole, he pays the same, his property, computed by the standard of what he voluntarily pays, must remain the same. But I am willing to forego that fair advantage in the inquiry. I am willing that the receipts of the permanent taxes which existed before January, 1793, should be compared during the war, and during the period of peace which I have mentioned. I will go further. Complete accounts of the year 1791 were separately laid before your House. I am ready to stand by a comparison of the produce of four years up to the beginning of the year 1792 with that of the war. Of the year immediately previous to hostilities I have not been able to obtain any perfect documents; but I have seen

enough to satisfy me, that, although a comparison including that year might be less favorable, yet it would not essentially injure my argument.

You will always bear in mind, my dear Sir, that I am not considering whether, if the common enemy of the quiet of Europe had not forced us to take up arms in our own defence, the spring-tide of our prosperity might not have flowed higher than the mark at which it now stands. That consideration is connected with the question of the justice and the necessity of the war. It is a question which I have long since discussed. I am now endeavoring to ascertain whether there exists, in fact, any such necessity as we hear every day asserted, to furnish a miserable pretext for counselling us to surrender at discretion our conquests, our honor, our dignity, our very independence, and, with it, all that is dear to man. It will be more than sufficient for that purpose, if I can make it appear that we have been stationary during the war. What, then, will be said, if, in reality, it shall be proved that there is every indication of increased and increasing wealth, not only poured into the grand reservoir of the national capital, but diffused through all the channels of all the higher classes, and giving life and activity, as it passes, to the agriculture, the manufactures, the commerce, and the navigation of the country?

The Finance Committee which has been appointed in this session has already made two reports. Every conclusion that I had before drawn, as you know, from my own observation, I have the satisfaction of seeing there confirmed by that great public authority. Large as was the sum by which the committee of 1791 found the estimate of 1786 to have been exceeded in the actual produce of four years

of peace, their own estimate has been exceeded during the war by a sum more than one third larger. The same taxes have yielded more than half a million beyond their calculation. They yielded this, notwithstanding the stoppage of the distilleries, against which, you may remember, I privately remonstrated. With an allowance for that defalcation, they have yielded sixty thousand pounds annually above the actual average of the preceding four years of peace. I believe this to have been without parallel in all former wars. If regard be had to the great and unavoidable burdens of the present war, I am confident of the fact.

But let us descend to particulars. The taxes which go by the general name of Assessed Taxes comprehend the whole, or nearly the whole, domestic establishment of the rich. They include some things which belong to the middling, and even to all but the very lowest classes. They now consist of the duties on houses and windows, on male servants, horses, and carriages. They did also extend to cottages, to female servants, wagons, and carts used in husbandry, previous to the year 1792, — when, with more enlightened policy, at the moment that the possibility of war could not be out of the contemplation of any statesman, the wisdom of Parliament confined them to their present objects. I shall give the gross assessment for five years, as I find it in the Appendix to the Second Report of your committee.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1791 ending 5th April | 1792 . . . . | £ 1,706,334 |
| 1792 . . . . . | 1793 . . . . . | 1,585,991 |
| 1793 . . . . . | 1794 . . . . . | 1,597,623 |
| 1794 . . . . . | 1795 . . . . . | 1,608,196 |
| 1795 . . . . . | 1796 . . . . . | 1,625,874 |

Here will be seen a gradual increase during the whole progress of the war; and if I am correctly informed, the rise in the last year, after every deduction that can be made, affords the most consoling and encouraging prospect. It is enormously out of all proportion.

There are some other taxes which seem to have a reference to the same general head. The present minister many years ago subjected bricks and tiles to a duty under the excise. It is of little consequence to our present consideration, whether these materials have been employed in building more commodious, more elegant, and more magnificent habitations, or in enlarging, decorating, and remodelling those which sufficed for our plainer ancestors. During the first two years of the war, they paid so largely to the public revenue, that in 1794 a new duty was laid upon them, which was equal to one half of the old, and which has produced upwards of 165,000*l.* in the last three years. Yet, notwithstanding the pressure of this additional weight,* there has been an actual augmentation in the consumption.

* This and the following tables on the same construction are compiled from the Reports of the Finance Committee in 1791 and 1797, with the addition of the separate paper laid before the House of Commons, and ordered to be printed, on the 7th of February, 1792.

BRICKS AND TILES.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 94,521 | 1793 . . | 122,975 | |
| 1788 . . | 96,278 | 1794 . . | 106,811 | |
| 1789 . . | 91,773 | 1795 . . | 83,804 | |
| 1790 . . | 104,409 | 1796 . . | 94,668 | |
| | £386,981 | | £408,258 | Increase to 1790 £21,277. |
| 1791 . | £115,382 | 4 Years to 1791 | £407,842 | Increase to 1791 £416. |

The only two other articles which come under this description are the stamp-duty on gold and silver plate, and the customs on glass plates. This latter is now, I believe, the single instance of costly furniture to be found in the catalogue of our imports. If it were wholly to vanish, I should not think we were ruined. Both the duties have risen, during the war, very considerably in proportion to the total of their produce.

We have no tax among us on the most necessary articles of food. The receipts of our Custom-House, under the head of Groceries, afford us, however, some means of calculating our luxuries of the table. The articles of tea, coffee, and cocoa-nuts I would propose to omit, and to take them instead from the excise, as best showing what is consumed at home. Upon this principle, adding them all together, (with the exception of sugar, for a reason which I shall afterwards mention,) I find that they have produced,

PLATE.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 22,707 | 1793 . . | 25,920 | |
| 1788 . . | 23,295 | 1794 . . | 23,637 | |
| 1789 . . | 22,453 | 1795 . . | 25,607 | |
| 1790 . . | 18,433 | 1796 . . | 28,513 | |
| | £86,888 | | £103,677 | Increase to 1790 £16,789. |
| 1791 . . | £31,523 | 4 Years to 1791 | £95,704 | Increase to 1791 £7,973. |

GLASS PLATES.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | —— | 1793 . . | 5,655 | |
| 1788 . . | 5,496 | 1794 . . | 5,456 | |
| 1789 . . | 4,686 | 1795 . . | 5,839 | |
| 1790 . . | 6,008 | 1796 . . | 8,871 | |
| | £16,190 | | £25,821 | |
| 1791 . . | £7,880 | 4 Years to 1791 | £24,070 | Increase to 1791 £1,751. |

in one mode of comparison, upwards of 272,000*l.*, and in the other mode upwards of 165,000*l.*, more during the war than in peace.* An additional duty was also laid in 1795 on tea, another on coffee, and a third on raisins, — an article, together with currants, of much more extensive use than would readily be imagined. The balance in favor of our argument would have been much enhanced, if our coffee and fruit ships from the Mediterranean had arrived,

* GROCERIES.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 167,389 | 1793 . . | 124,655 | |
| 1788 . . | 133,191 | 1794 . . | 195,840 | |
| 1789 . . | 142,871 | 1795 . . | 208,242 | |
| 1790 . . | 156,311 | 1796 . . | 159,826 | Increase to 1790 |
| | £599,762 | | £688,563 | £88,801. |
| 1791 . . | £236,727 | 4 Years to 1791 | £669,100 | Increase to 1791 £19,463. |

TEA.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 424,144 | 1793 . . | 477,644 | |
| 1788 . . | 426,660 | 1794 . . | 467,132 | |
| 1789 . . | 539,575 | 1795 . . | 507,518 | |
| 1790 . . | 417,736 | 1796 . . | 526,307 | Increase to 1790 |
| | £1,808,115 | | £1,978,601 | £170,486. |
| 1791 . . | £448,709 | 4 Years to 1791 | £1,832,680 | Increase to 1791 £145,921. |

The additional duty imposed in 1795 produced in that year 137,656*l.*, and in 1796, 200,107*l.*

COFFEE AND COCOA-NUTS.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 17,006 | 1793 . . | 36,846 | |
| 1788 . . | 30,217 | 1794 . . | 49,177 | |
| 1789 . . | 34,784 | 1795 . . | 27,913 | |
| 1790 . . | 38,647 | 1796 . . | 19,711 | Increase to 1790 |
| | £120,654 | | £133,647 | £12,993. |
| 1791 . . | £41,194 | 4 Years to 1791 | £144,842 | Decrease to 1791 £11,195. |

The additional duty of 1795 in that year gave 16,775*l.*, and in 1796, 15,319*l.*

last year, at their usual season. They do not appear in these accounts. This was one consequence arising (would to God that none more afflicting to Italy, to Europe, and the whole civilized world had arisen!) from our impolitic and precipitate desertion of that important maritime station. As to sugar,* I have excluded it from the groceries, because the account of the customs is not a perfect criterion of the consumption, much having been reëxported to the North of Europe, which used to be supplied by France; and in the official papers which I have followed there are no materials to furnish grounds for computing this reëxportation. The increase on the face of our entries is immense during the four years of war, — little short of thirteen hundred thousand pounds.

The increase of the duties on beer has been regularly progressive, or nearly so, to a very large amount.† It is a good deal above a million, and is

* SUGAR.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 1,065,109 | 1793 . . | 1,473,139 | |
| 1788 . . | 1,184,458 | 1794 . . | 1,392,965 | |
| 1789 . . | 1,095,106 | 1795 . . | 1,338,246 | |
| 1790 . . | 1,069,108 | 1796 . . | 1,474,899 | |
| | £4,413,781 | | £5,679,249 | Increase to 1790 £1,265,468. |
| 1791 . | £1,044,053 | 4 Years to 1791 | £4,392,725 | Increase to 1791 £1,286,524. |

There was a new duty on sugar in 1791, which produced in 1794 234,292*l.*, in 1795, 206,932*l.*, and in 1796, 245,024*l.* It is not clear from the report of the committee, whether the additional duty is included in the account given above.

† BEER, &c.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 1,761,429 | 1793 . . | 2,043,902 | |
| 1788 . . | 1,705,199 | 1794 . . | 2,082,053 | |
| 1789 . . | 1,742,514 | 1795 . . | 1,931,101 | |
| 1790 . . | 1,858,043 | 1796 . . | 2,294,377 | |
| | £7,067,185 | | £8,351,433 | Increase to 1790 £1,284,248. |
| 1791 . | £1,880,478 | 4 Years to 1791 | £7,186,234 | Increase to 1791 £1,165,199. |

more than equal to one eighth of the whole produce. Under this general head some other liquors are included, — cider, perry, and mead, as well as vinegar and verjuice; but these are of very trifling consideration. The excise duties on wine, having sunk a little during the first two years of the war, were rapidly recovering their level again. In 1795 a heavy additional duty was imposed upon them, and a second in the following year; yet, being compared with four years of peace to 1790, they actually exhibit a small gain to the revenue. And low as the importation may

WINE.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 219,934 | 1793 . . | 222,887 | |
| 1788 . . | 215,578 | 1794 . . | 283,644 | |
| 1789 . . | 252,649 | 1795 . . | 317,072 | |
| 1790 . . | 308,624 | 1796 . . | 187,818 | Increase to 1790 |
| | £ 996,785 | | £ 1,011,421 | £ 14,636. |
| | | | | Decrease to 1791 |
| 1791 . . | £ 336,549 | 4 Years to 1791 | £1,113,400 | £ 101,979. |

QUANTITY IMPORTED.

| Years of Peace. | Tuns. | Years of War. | Tuns. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . . | 22,978 | 1793 . | 22,788 |
| 1788 . . . | 25,442 | 1794 . . . | 27,868 |
| 1789 . . . | 27,414 | 1795 . . . | 32,033 |
| 1790 . . . | 29,182 | 1796 . . . | 19,079 |

The additional duty of 1795 produced that year 736,871*l.*, and in 1796, 432,689*l.* A second additional duty, which produced 98,165*l.*, was laid in 1796.

SWEETS.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 11,167 | 1793 . . | 11,016 | |
| 1788 . . | 7,375 | 1794 . . | 10,612 | |
| 1789 . . | 7,202 | 1795 . . | 13,321 | |
| 1790 . . | 4,953 | 1796 . . | 15,050 | Increase to 1790 |
| | £ 30,697 | | £ 49,999 | £ 19,302. |
| | | | | Increase to 1791 |
| 1791 . . | £ 13,282 | 4 Years to 1791 | £ 32,812 | £ 17,187. |

In 1795 an additional duty was laid on this article, which produced that year 5,679*l.*, and in 1796, 9,443*l.*; and in 1796 a second, to commence on the 20th of June: its produce in that year was 2,325*l.*

seem in 1796, when contrasted with any year since the French treaty in 1787, it is still more than 3000 tuns above the average importation for three years previous to that period. I have added sweets, from which our factitious wines are made; and I would have added spirits, but that the total alteration of the duties in 1789, and the recent interruption of our distilleries, rendered any comparison impracticable.

The ancient staple of our island, in which we are clothed, is very imperfectly to be traced on the books of the Custom-House: but I know that our woollen manufactures flourish. I recollect to have seen that fact very fully established, last year, from the registers kept in the West Riding of Yorkshire. This year, in the West of England, I received a similar account, on the authority of a respectable clothier in that quarter, whose testimony can less be questioned, because, in his political opinions, he is adverse, as I understand, to the continuance of the war. The principal articles of female dress for some time past have been muslins and calicoes.* These elegant fabrics of our own looms in the East, which serve for the remittance of our own revenues, have lately been imitated at home, with improving success, by the ingenious and enterprising manufacturers of Manchester, Paisley, and Glasgow. At the same time the importation from Bengal has kept pace with the

* MUSLINS AND CALICOES.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1788 . . | 129,297 | 1793 . . | 173,050 | |
| 1789 . . | 138,660 | 1794 . . | 104,902 | |
| 1790 . . | 126,267 | 1795 . . | 103,857 | |
| 1791 . . | 128,365 | 1796 . . | 272,544 | |
| | £ 522,589 | | £ 654,353 | Increase to 1791 £ 131,764. |

This table begins with 1788. The net produce of the preceding year is not in the report whence the table is taken.

extension of our own dexterity and industry; while the sale of our printed goods,* of both kinds, has been with equal steadiness advanced by the taste and execution of our designers and artists. Our woollens and cottons, it is true, are not all for the home market. They do not distinctly prove, what is my present point, our own wealth by our own expense. I admit it: we export them in great and growing quantities: and they who croak themselves hoarse about the decay of our trade may put as much of this account as they choose to the creditor side of money received from other countries in payment for British skill and labor. They may settle the items to their own liking, where all goes to demonstrate our riches. I shall be contented here with whatever they will have the goodness to leave me, and pass to another entry, which is less ambiguous, — I mean that of silk.† The manu-

* PRINTED GOODS.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 142,000 | 1793 . . | 191,566 | |
| 1788 . . | 154,486 | 1794 . . | 190,554 | |
| 1789 . . | 153,202 | 1795 . . | 197,416 | |
| 1790 . . | 167,156 | 1796 . . | 230,530 | |
| | £616,844 | | £810,066 | Increase to 1790 £193,222. |
| 1791 . . | £191,489 | 4 Years to 1791 | £666,333 | Increase to 1791 £143,733. |

These duties for 1787 are blended with several others. The proportion of printed goods to the other articles for four years was found to be one fourth. That proportion is here taken.

† SILK.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 166,912 | 1793 . . | 209,915 | |
| 1788 . . | 123,998 | 1794 . . | 221,306 | |
| 1789 . . | 157,730 | 1795 . . | 210,725 | |
| 1790 . . | 212,522 | 1796 . . | 221,007 | |
| | £661,162 | | £862,953 | Increase to 1790 £201,791. |
| 1791 . . | £279,128 | 4 Years to 1791 | £773,378 | Increase to 1791 £89,575. |

factory itself is a forced plant. We have been obliged to guard it from foreign competition by very strict prohibitory laws. What we import is the raw and prepared material, which is worked up in various ways, and worn in various shapes by both sexes. After what we have just seen, you will probably be surprised to learn that the quantity of silk imported during the war has been much greater than it was previously in peace; and yet we must all remember, to our mortification, that several of our silk ships fell a prey to Citizen Admiral Richery. You will hardly expect me to go through the tape and thread, and all the other small wares of haberdashery and millinery to be gleaned up among our imports. But I shall make one observation, and with great satisfaction, respecting them. They gradually diminish, as our own manufactures of the same description spread into their places; while the account of ornamental articles which our country does not produce, and we cannot wish it to produce, continues, upon the whole, to rise, in spite of all the caprices of fancy and fashion. Of this kind are the different furs * used for muffs, trimmings, and linings, which, as the chief of the kind, I shall particularize. You will find them below.

The diversions of the higher classes form another

* FURS.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 3,464 | 1793 . . | 2,829 | |
| 1788 . . | 2,958 | 1794 . . | 3,353 | |
| 1789 . . | 1,151 | 1795 . . | 3,666 | |
| 1790 . . | 3,328 | 1796 . . | 6,138 | |
| | £10,901 | | £15,986 | Increase to 1790 £5,085. |
| 1791 . . | £5,731 | 4 Years to 1791 | £13,168 | Increase to 1791 £2,818. |

The skins here selected from the Custom-House accounts are, *Black Bear, Ordinary Fox, Marten, Mink, Musquash, Otter, Raccoon,* and *Wolf.*

and the only remaining head of inquiry into their expenses: I mean those diversions which distinguish the country and the town life, — which are visible and tangible to the statesman, — which have some public measure and standard. And here, when I look to the report of your committee, I, for the first time, perceive a failure. It is clearly so. Whichever way I reckon the four years of peace, the old tax on the sports of the field has certainly proved deficient since the war. The same money, however, or nearly the same, has been paid to government, — though the same number of individuals have not contributed to the payment. An additional tax was laid in 1791, and during the war has produced upwards of 61,000*l.*, which is about 4000*l.* more than the decrease of the old tax, in one scheme of comparison, and about 4000*l.* less, in the other scheme. I might remark, that the amount of the new tax, in the several years of the war, by no means bears the proportion which it ought to the old. There seems to be some great irregularity or other in the receipt. But I do not think it worth while to examine into the argument. I am willing to suppose that many, who, in the idleness of peace, made war upon partridges, hares, and pheasants, may now carry more noble arms against the enemies of their country. Our political adversaries may do what they please with that concession. They are welcome to make the most of it. I am sure of a very handsome set-off in the other branch of expense, — the amusements of a town life.

There is much gayety and dissipation and profusion which must escape and disappoint all the arithmetic of political economy. But the theatres are a prominent feature. They are established through every part of the kingdom, at a cost unknown till our days.

There is hardly a provincial capital which does not possess, or which does not aspire to possess, a theatre-royal. Most of them engage for a short time, at a vast price, every actor or actress of name in the metropolis: a distinction which in the reign of my old friend Garrick was confined to very few. The dresses, the scenes, the decorations of every kind, I am told, are in a new style of splendor and magnificence: whether to the advantage of our dramatic taste, upon the whole, I very much doubt. It is a show and a spectacle, not a play, that is exhibited. This is undoubtedly in the genuine manner of the Augustan age, but in a manner which was censured by one of the best poets and critics of that or any age: —

> Migravit ab aure voluptas
> Omnis ad incertos oculos, et gaudia vana:
> Quatuor aut plures aulæa premuntur in horas,
> Dum fugiunt equitum turmæ, peditumque catervæ; —

I must interrupt the passage, most fervently to deprecate and abominate the sequel: —

> Mox trahitur manibus regum fortuna retortis.

I hope that no French fraternization, which the relations of peace and amity with systematized regicide would assuredly sooner or later draw after them, even if it should overturn our happy Constitution itself, could so change the hearts of Englishmen as to make them delight in representations and processions which have no other merit than that of degrading and insulting the name of royalty. But good taste, manners, morals, religion, all fly, wherever the principles of Jacobinism enter; and we have no safety against them but in arms.

The proprietors, whether in this they follow or lead what is called the town, to furnish out these gaudy and pompous entertainments, must collect so much

more from the public. It was but just before the breaking out of hostilities, that they levied for themselves the very tax which, at the close of the American war, they represented to Lord North as certain ruin to their affairs to demand for the state. The example has since been imitated by the managers of our Italian Opera. Once during the war, if not twice, (I would not willingly misstate anything, but I am not very accurate on these subjects,) they have raised the price of their subscription. Yet I have never heard that any lasting dissatisfaction has been manifested, or that their houses have been unusually and constantly thin. On the contrary, all the three theatres have been repeatedly altered, and refitted, and enlarged, to make them capacious of the crowds that nightly flock to them; and one of those huge and lofty piles, which lifts its broad shoulders in gigantic pride, almost emulous of the temples of God, has been reared from the foundation at a charge of more than fourscore thousand pounds, and yet remains a naked, rough, unsightly heap.

I am afraid, my dear Sir, that I have tired you with these dull, though important details. But we are upon a subject which, like some of a higher nature, refuses ornament, and is contented with conveying instruction. I know, too, the obstinacy of unbelief in those perverted minds which have no delight but in contemplating the supposed distress and predicting the immediate ruin of their country. These birds of evil presage at all times have grated our ears with their melancholy song; and, by some strange fatality or other, it has generally happened that they have poured forth their loudest and deepest lamentations at the periods of our most abundant prosperity. Very early in my public life I had oc-

casion to make myself a little acquainted with their natural history. My first political tract in the collection which a friend has made of my publications is an answer to a very gloomy picture of the state of the nation, which was thought to have been drawn by a statesman of some eminence in his time. That was no more than the common spleen of disappointed ambition: in the present day I fear that too many are actuated by a more malignant and dangerous spirit. They hope, by depressing our minds with a despair of our means and resources, to drive us, trembling and unresisting, into the toils of our enemies, with whom, from the beginning of the Revolution in France, they have ever moved in strict concert and coöperation. If, with the report of your Finance Committee in their hands, they can still affect to despond, and can still succeed, as they do, in spreading the contagion of their pretended fears among well-disposed, though weak men, there is no way of counteracting them, but by fixing them down to particulars. Nor must we forget that they are unwearied agitators, bold assertors, dexterous sophisters. Proof must be accumulated upon proof, to silence them. With this view, I shall now direct your attention to some other striking and unerring indications of our flourishing condition; and they will, in general, be derived from other sources, but equally authentic: from other reports and proceedings of both Houses of Parliament, all which unite with wonderful force of consent in the same general result. Hitherto we have seen the superfluity of our capital discovering itself only in procuring superfluous accommodation and enjoyment, in our houses, in our furniture, in our establishments, in our eating and drinking, our clothing, and our public diversions:

we shall now see it more beneficially employed in improving our territory itself: we shall see part of our present opulence, with provident care, put out to usury for posterity.

To what ultimate extent it may be wise or practicable to push inclosures of common and waste lands may be a question of doubt, in some points of view: but no person thinks them already carried to excess; and the relative magnitude of the sums laid out upon them gives us a standard of estimating the comparative situation of the landed interest. Your House, this session, appointed a committee on waste lands, and they have made a report by their chairman, an honorable baronet, for whom the minister the other day (with very good intentions, I believe, but with little real profit to the public) thought fit to erect a board of agriculture. The account, as it stands there, appears sufficiently favorable. The greatest number of inclosing bills passed in any one year of the last peace does not equal the smallest annual number in the war, and those of the last year exceed by more than one half the highest year of peace. But what was my surprise, on looking into the late report of the Secret Committee of the Lords, to find a list of these bills during the war, differing in every year, and * larger on the whole by nearly one third!

* Report of the Lords' Committee of Secrecy, ordered to be printed 28th April, 1797, Appendix 44.

INCLOSURE BILLS.

| Years of Peace | | Years of War. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1789 | 33 | 1793 | 60 |
| 1790 | 25 | 1794 | 74 |
| 1791 | 40 | 1795 | 77 |
| 1792 | 40 | 1796 | 72 |
| | 138 | | 283 |

I have checked this account by the statute-book, and find it to be correct. What new brilliancy, then, does it throw over the prospect, bright as it was before! The number during the last four years has more than doubled that of the four years immediately preceding; it has surpassed the five years of peace, beyond which the Lords' committees have not gone; it has even surpassed (I have verified the fact) the whole ten years of peace. I cannot stop here. I cannot advance a single step in this inquiry without being obliged to cast my eyes back to the period when I first knew the country. These bills, which had begun in the reign of Queen Anne, had passed every year in greater or less numbers from the year 1723; yet in all that space of time they had not reached the amount of any two years during the present war; and though soon after that time they rapidly increased, still at the accession of his present Majesty they were far short of the number passed in the four years of hostilities.

In my first letter I mentioned the state of our inland navigation, neglected as it had been from the reign of King William to the time of my observation. It was not till the present reign that the Duke of Bridgewater's canal first excited a spirit of speculation and adventure in this way. This spirit showed itself, but necessarily made no great progress, in the American war. When peace was restored, it began of course to work with more sensible effect; yet in ten years from that event the bills passed on that subject were not so many as from the year 1793 to the present session of Parliament. From what I can trace on the statute-book, I am confident that all the capital expended in these projects during the peace

bore no degree of proportion (I doubt, on very grave consideration, whether all that was ever so expended was equal) to the money which has been raised for the same purposes since the war.* I know that in the last four years of peace, when they rose regularly and rapidly, the sums specified in the acts were not near one third of the subsequent amount. In the last session of Parliament, the Grand Junction Company, as it is called, having sunk half a million, (of which I feel the good effects at my own door,) applied to your House for permission to subscribe half as much more among themselves. This Grand Junction is an inosculation of the Grand Trunk; and in the present session, the latter company has obtained the authority of Parliament to float two hundred acres of land, for the purpose of forming a reservoir, thirty feet deep, two hundred yards wide at the head, and two miles in length: a lake which may almost vie with that which once fed the now obliterated canal of Languedoc.

The present war is, above all others of which we have heard or read, a war against landed property. That description of property is in its nature the firm base of every stable government,—and has been so considered by all the wisest writers of the old philosophy, from the time of the Stagyrite, who observes that the agricultural class of all others is the least

* NAVIGATION AND CANAL BILLS.

| Years of Peace. | | Years of War. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1789 | 3 | 1793 | 28 |
| 1790 | 8 | 1794 | 18 |
| 1791 | 10 | 1795 | 11 |
| 1792 | 9 | 1796 | 12 |
| | 30 | | 69 |
| Money raised | £2,377,200 | | £7,415,100 |

inclined to sedition. We find it to have been so regarded in the practical politics of antiquity, where they are brought more directly home to our understandings and bosoms in the history of Rome, and above all, in the writings of Cicero. The country tribes were always thought more respectable than those of the city. And if in our own history there is any one circumstance to which, under God, are to be attributed the steady resistance, the fortunate issue, and sober settlement of all our struggles for liberty, it is, that, while the landed interest, instead of forming a separate body, as in other countries, has at all times been in close connection and union with the other great interests of the country, it has been spontaneously allowed to lead and direct and moderate all the rest. I cannot, therefore, but see with singular gratification, that, during a war which has been eminently made for the destruction of the landed proprietors, as well as of priests and kings, as much has been done by public works for the permanent benefit of their stake in this country as in all the rest of the current century, which now touches to its close. Perhaps after this it may not be necessary to refer to private observation; but I am satisfied that in general the rents of lands have been considerably increased: they are increased very considerably, indeed, if I may draw any conclusion from my own little property of that kind. I am not ignorant, however, where our public burdens are most galling. But all of this class will consider who they are that are principally menaced, — how little the men of their description in other countries, where this revolutionary fury has but touched, have been found equal to their own protection, — how tardy and unprovided and full of anguish is their flight, chained down as they are by

every tie to the soil, — how helpless they are, above all other men, in exile, in poverty, in need, in all the varieties of wretchedness; and then let them well weigh what are the burdens to which they ought not to submit for their own salvation.

Many of the authorities which I have already adduced, or to which I have referred, may convey a competent notion of some of our principal manufactures. Their general state will be clear from that of our external and internal commerce, through which they circulate, and of which they are at once the cause and effect. But the communication of the several parts of the kingdom with each other and with foreign countries has always been regarded as one of the most certain tests to evince the prosperous or adverse state of our trade in all its branches. Recourse has usually been had to the revenue of the Post-Office with this view. I shall include the product of the tax which was laid in the last war, and which will make the evidence more conclusive, if it shall afford the same inference: I allude to the Post-Horse duty, which shows the personal intercourse within the kingdom, as the Post-Office shows the intercourse by letters both within and without. The first of these standards, then, exhibits an increase, according to my former schemes of comparison, from an eleventh to a twentieth part of the whole duty.*

* POST-HORSE DUTY.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 169,410 | 1793 . . | 191,488 | |
| 1788 . . | 204,659 | 1794 . . | 202,884 | |
| 1789 . . | 170,554 | 1795 . . | 196,691 | |
| 1790 . . | 181,155 | 1796 . . | 204,061 | |
| | £725,778 | | £795,124 | Increase to 1790 £69,346. |
| 1791 . . | £198,634 | 4 Years to 1791 | £755,002 | Increase to 1791 £40,122. |

The Post-Office gives still less consolation to those who are miserable in proportion as the country feels no misery. From the commencement of the war to the month of April, 1796, the gross produce had increased by nearly one sixth of the whole sum which the state now derives from that fund. I find that the year ending 5th of April, 1793, gave 627,592*l.*, and the year ending at the same quarter in 1796, 750,637*l.*, after a fair deduction having been made for the alteration (which, you know, on grounds of policy I never approved) in your privilege of franking. I have seen no formal document subsequent to that period, but I have been credibly informed there is very good ground to believe that the revenue of the Post-Office * still continues to be regularly and largely upon the rise.

* The above account is taken from a paper which was ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 8th December, 1796. From the gross produce of the year ending 5th April, 1796, there has been deducted in that statement the sum of 36,666*l.*, in consequence of the regulation on franking, which took place on the 5th May, 1795, and was computed at 40,000*l.* per ann. To show an equal number of years, both of peace and war, the accounts of two preceding years are given in the following table, from a report made since Mr. Burke's death by a committee of the House of Commons appointed to consider the claims of Mr. Palmer, the late Comptroller-General; and for still greater satisfaction, the number of letters, inwards and outwards, have been added, except for the year 1790 – 1791. The letter-book for that year is not to be found.

POST-OFFICE.

| Gross Revenue. | £ | Number of Letters. Inwards. | Outwards. |
|---|---|---|---|
| April, 1790 – 1791 . . . | 575,079 | | |
| 1791 – 1792 . . . | 585,432 | 6,391,149 | 5,081,344 |
| 1792 – 1793 . . . | 627,592 | 6,584,867 | 5,041,137 |
| 1793 – 1794 . . . | 691,268 | 7,094,777 | 6,537,234 |
| 1794 – 1795 . . . | 705,319 | 7,071,029 | 7,473,626 |
| 1795 – 1796 . . . | 750,637 | 7,641,077 | 8,597,167 |

From the last-mentioned report it appears that the accounts have

What is the true inference to be drawn from the annual number of bankruptcies has been the occasion of much dispute. On one side it has been confidently urged as a sure symptom of a decaying trade: on the other side it has been insisted that it is a circumstance attendant upon a thriving trade; for that the greater is the whole quantity of trade, the greater of course must be the positive number of failures, while the aggregate success is still in the same proportion. In truth, the increase of the number may arise from either of those causes. But all must agree in one conclusion, — that, if the number diminishes, and at the same time every other sort of evidence tends to show an augmentation of trade, there can be no better indication. We have already had very ample means of gathering that the year 1796 was a very favorable year of trade, and in that year the number of bankruptcies was at least one fifth below the usual average. I take this from the declaration of the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords.* He professed to speak from the records of Chancery; and he added another very striking fact, — that on the property actually paid into his court (a very small part, indeed, of the whole property of the kingdom) there had accrued in that year a net surplus of eight hundred thousand pounds, which was so much new capital.

But the real situation of our trade, during the

not been completely and authentically made up for the years ending 5th April, 1796 and 1797; but on the Receiver-General's books there is an increase of the latter year over the former, equal to something more than 5 per cent.

* In a debate, 30th December, 1796, on the return of Lord Malmesbury. — See Woodfall's Parliamentary Debates, Vol. XIII. p. 591.

whole of this war, deserves more minute investigation. I shall begin with that which, though the least in consequence, makes perhaps the most impression on our senses, because it meets our eyes in our daily walks: I mean our retail trade. The exuberant display of wealth in our shops was the sight which most amazed a learned foreigner of distinction who lately resided among us: his expression, I remember, was, that "*they seemed to be bursting with opulence into the streets.*" The documents which throw light on this subject are not many, but they all meet in the same point: all concur in exhibiting an increase. The most material are the general licenses* which the law requires to be taken out by all dealers in excisable commodities. These seem to be subject to considerable fluctuations. They have not been so low in any year of the war as in the years 1788 and 1789, nor ever so high in peace as in the first year of the war. I should next state the licenses to dealers in spirits and wine; but the change in them which took place in 1789 would give an unfair advantage to my argument. I shall therefore content myself with remarking, that from the date of that change the spirit licenses kept nearly the same level till the stoppage of the distilleries in 1795. If they dropped a little, (and it was but little,) the wine licenses, during the same time, more than counter-

* GENERAL LICENSES.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 44,030 | 1793 . . | 45,568 | |
| 1788 . . | 40,882 | 1794 . . | 42,129 | |
| 1789 . . | 39,917 | 1795 . . | 43,350 | |
| 1790 . . | 41,970 | 1796 . . | 41,190 | Increase to 1790 £3,438. |
| | £166,799 | | £170,237 | |
| 1791 . . | £44,240 | 4 Years to 1791 | £167,009 | Increase to 1791 £3,228. |

vailed that loss to the revenue; and it is remarkable with regard to the latter, that in the year 1796, which was the lowest in the excise duties on wine itself, as well as in the quantity imported, more dealers in wine appear to have been licensed than in any former year, excepting the first year of the war. This fact may raise some doubt whether the consumption has been lessened so much as, I believe, is commonly imagined. The only other retail-traders whom I found so entered as to admit of being selected are tea-dealers and sellers of gold and silver plate, both of whom seem to have multiplied very much in proportion to their aggregate number.* I have kept apart one set of licensed sellers, because I am aware that our antagonists may be inclined to triumph a little, when I name auctioneers and auctions. They may be disposed to consider it as a sort of trade which thrives by the distress of others. But if they will look at it a little more attentively, they will find

* DEALERS IN TEA.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 10,934 | 1793 . . | 13,939 | |
| 1788 . . | 11,949 | 1794 . . | 14,315 | |
| 1789 . . | 12,501 | 1795 . . | 13,956 | |
| 1790 . . | 13,126 | 1796 . . | 14,830 | |
| | £48,510 | | £57,040 | Increase to 1790 £8,530. |
| 1791 . | £13,921 | 4 Years to 1791 | £51,497 | Increase to 1791 £5,543. |

SELLERS OF PLATE.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 6,593 | 1793 . . | 8,178 | |
| 1788 . . | 7,953 | 1794 . . | 8,296 | |
| 1789 . . | 7,348 | 1795 . . | 8,128 | |
| 1790 . . | 7,988 | 1796 . . | 8,835 | |
| | £29,882 | | £33,437 | Increase to 1790 £3,555. |
| 1791 . . | £8,327 | 4 Years to 1791 | £31,616 | Increase to 1791 £1,821. |

their gloomy comfort vanish. The public income from these licenses has risen with very great regularity through a series of years which all must admit to have been years of prosperity. It is remarkable, too, that in the year 1793, which was the great year of bankruptcies, these duties on auctioneers and auctions* fell below the mark of 1791; and in 1796, which year had one fifth less than the accustomed average of bankruptcies, they mounted at once beyond all former examples. In concluding this general head, will you permit me, my dear Sir, to bring to your notice an humble, but industrious and laborious set of chapmen, against whom the vengeance of your House has sometimes been levelled, with what policy I need not stay to inquire, as they have escaped without much injury? The hawkers and peddlers,† I am assured, are still doing well, though, from some new arrangements respecting them made in 1789, it would be difficult to trace their proceedings in any satisfactory manner.

When such is the vigor of our traffic in its minutest ramifications, we may be persuaded that the root and the trunk are sound. When we see the life-blood of the state circulate so freely through the

* AUCTIONS AND AUCTIONEERS.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1787 . . | 48,964 | 1793 . . | 70,004 | |
| 1788 . . | 53,993 | 1794 . . | 82,659 | |
| 1789 . . | 52,024 | 1795 . . | 86,890 | |
| 1790 . . | 53,156 | 1796 . . | 109,594 | |
| | £208,137 | | £349,147 | Increase to 1790 £141,010. |
| 1791 . . | £70,973 | 4 Years to 1791 | £230,146 | Increase to 1791 £119,001. |

† Since Mr. Burke's death a Fourth Report of the Committee of Finance has made its appearance. An account is there given from

capillary vessels of the system, we scarcely need inquire if the heart performs its functions aright. But let us approach it; let us lay it bare, and watch the systole and diastole, as it now receives and now pours forth the vital stream through all the members. The port of London has always supplied the main evidence of the state of our commerce. I know, that, amidst all the difficulties and embarrassments of the year 1793, from causes unconnected with and prior to the war, the tonnage of ships in the Thames actually rose. But I shall not go through a detail of official papers on this point. There is evidence, which has appeared this very session before your House, infinitely more forcible and impressive to my apprehension than all the journals and ledgers of all the Inspectors-General from the days of Davenant. It is such as cannot carry with it any sort of fallacy. It comes, not from one set, but from many opposite sets of witnesses, who all agree in nothing else: witnesses of the gravest and most unexceptionable character, and who confirm what they say, in the surest manner, by their conduct. Two different bills have been brought in for improving the port of London. I have it from very good intelligence, that,

the Stamp-Office of the gross produce of duties on Hawkers and Peddlers for four years of peace and four of war. It is therefore added in the manner of the other tables.

HAWKERS AND PEDDLERS.

| Years of Peace. | £ | Years of War. | £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1789 . . . | 6,132 | 1793 . . . | 6,042 |
| 1790 . . . | 6,708 | 1794 . . . | 6,104 |
| 1791 . . . | 6,482 | 1795 . . . | 6,795 |
| 1792 . . . | 6,008 | 1796 . . . | 7,882 |
| | £25,330 | | £26,823 |

Increase in 4 Years of War . . . . . £1,493

when the project was first suggested from necessity, there were no less than eight different plans, supported by eight different bodies of subscribers. The cost of the least was estimated at two hundred thousand pounds, and of the most extensive at twelve hundred thousand. The two between which the contest now lies substantially agree (as all the others must have done) in the motives and reasons of the preamble; but I shall confine myself to that bill which is proposed on the part of the mayor, aldermen, and common council, because I regard them as the best authority, and their language in itself is fuller and more precise. I certainly see them complain of the "great delays, accidents, damages, losses, and extraordinary expenses, which are almost continually sustained, to the hindrance and discouragement of commerce, and the great injury of the public revenue." But what are the causes to which they attribute their complaints? The first is, "THAT, FROM THE VERY GREAT AND PROGRESSIVE INCREASE OF THE NUMBER AND SIZE OF SHIPS AND OTHER VESSELS TRADING TO THE PORT OF LONDON, the river Thames, in and near the said port, is in general so much crowded with shipping, lighters, and other craft, that the navigation of a considerable part of the river is thereby rendered tedious and dangerous; and there is great want of room in the said port for the safe and convenient mooring of vessels, and constant access to them." The second is of the same nature. It is the want of regulations and arrangements, never before found necessary, for expedition and facility. The third is of another kind, but to the same effect: That the legal quays are too confined, and there is not sufficient accommodation for

the landing and shipping of cargoes. And the fourth and last is still different: they describe the avenues to the legal quays (which, little more than a century since, the great fire of London opened and dilated beyond the measure of our then circumstances) to be now "incommodious, and much too narrow for the great concourse of carts and other carriages usually passing and repassing therein." Thus our trade has grown too big for the ancient limits of Art and Nature. Our streets, our lanes, our shores, the river itself, which has so long been our pride, are impeded and obstructed and choked up by our riches. They are, like our shops, "bursting with opulence." To these misfortunes, to these distresses and grievances alone, we are told, it is to be imputed that still more of our capital has not been pushed into the channel of our commerce, to roll back in its reflux still more abundant capital, and fructify the national treasury in its course. Indeed, my dear Sir, when I have before my eyes this consentient testimony of the corporation of the city of London, the West India merchants, and all the other merchants who promoted the other plans, struggling and contending which of them shall be permitted to lay out their money in consonance with their testimony, I cannot turn aside to examine what one or two violent petitions, tumultuously voted by real or pretended liverymen of London, may have said of the utter destruction and annihilation of trade.

This opens a subject on which every true lover of his country, and, at this crisis, every friend to the liberties of Europe, and of social order in every country, must dwell and expatiate with delight. I mean to wind up all my proofs of our astonishing and

almost incredible prosperity with the valuable information given to the Secret Committee of the Lords by the Inspector-General. And here I am happy that I can administer an antidote to all despondence from the same dispensary from which the first dose of poison was supposed to have come. The report of that committee is generally believed to have derived much benefit from the labors of the same noble lord who was said, as the author of the pamphlet of 1795, to have led the way in teaching us to place all our hope on that very experiment which he afterwards declared in his place to have been from the beginning utterly without hope. We have now his authority to say, that, as far as our resources were concerned, the experiment was equally without necessity.

"It appears," as the committee has very justly and satisfactorily observed, "by the accounts of the value of the imports and exports for the last twenty years, produced by Mr. Irving, Inspector-General of Imports and Exports, that the demands for cash to be sent abroad" (which, by the way, including the loan to the Emperor, was nearly one third less sent to the Continent of Europe than in the Seven Years' War) . . . . "was greatly compensated by a very large balance of commerce in favor of this kingdom, — greater than was ever known in any preceding period. The value of the exports of the last year amounted, according to the valuation on which the accounts of the Inspector-General are founded, to 30,424,184*l.*, which is more than double what it was in any year of the American war, and one third more than it was on an average during the last peace, previous to the year 1792; and though the value of the imports to this country has during the same period greatly increased,

the excess of the value of the exports above that of the imports, which constitutes the balance of trade, has augmented even in a greater proportion." These observations might perhaps be branched out into other points of view, but I shall leave them to your own active and ingenious mind. There is another and still more important light in which the Inspector-General's information may be seen, — and that is, as affording a comparison of some circumstances in this war with the commercial history of all our other wars in the present century.

In all former hostilities, our exports gradually declined in value, and then (with one single exception) ascended again, till they reached and passed the level of the preceding peace. But this was a work of time, sometimes more, sometimes less slow. In Queen Anne's war, which began in 1702, it was an interval of ten years before this was effected. Nine years only were necessary, in the war of 1739, for the same operation. The Seven Years' War saw the period much shortened: hostilities began in 1755; and in 1758, the fourth year of the war, the exports mounted above the peace-mark. There was, however, a distinguishing feature of that war, — that our tonnage, to the very last moment, was in a state of great depression, while our commerce was chiefly carried on by foreign vessels. The American war was darkened with singular and peculiar adversity Our exports never came near to their peaceful elevation, and our tonnage continued, with very little fluctuation, to subside lower and lower.* On the

* This account is extracted from different parts of Mr. Chalmers's estimate. It is but just to mention, that in Mr. Chalmers's estimate the sums are uniformly lower than those of the same year in Mr. Irving's account.

other hand, the present war, with regard to our commerce, has the white mark of as singular felicity. If, from internal causes, as well as the consequence of hostilities, the tide ebbed in 1793, it rushed back again with a bore in the following year, and from that time has continued to swell and run every successive year higher and higher into all our ports. The value of our exports last year above the year 1792 (the mere increase of our commerce during the war) is equal to the average value of all the exports during the wars of William and Anne.

It has been already pointed out, that our imports have not kept pace with our exports: of course, on the face of the account, the balance of trade, both positively and comparatively considered, must have been much more than ever in our favor. In that early little tract of mine, to which I have already more than once referred, I made many observations on the usual method of computing that balance, as well as the usual objection to it, that the entries at the Custom-House were not always true. As you probably remember them, I shall not repeat them here. On the one hand, I am not surprised that the same trite objection is perpetually renewed by the detractors of our national affluence; and on the other hand, I am gratified in perceiving that the balance of trade seems to be now computed in a manner much clearer than it used to be from those errors which I formerly noticed. The Inspector-General appears to have made his estimate with every possible guard and caution. His opinion is entitled to the greatest respect. It was in substance, (I shall again use the words of the Report, as much better than my own,) "that the true bal-

ance of our trade amounted, on a medium of the four years preceding January, 1796, to upwards of 6,500,000*l.* per annum, exclusive of the profits arising from our East and West India trade, which he estimates at upwards of 4,000,000*l.* per annum, exclusive of the profits derived from our fisheries." So that, including the fisheries, and making a moderate allowance for the exceedings, which Mr. Irving himself supposes, beyond his calculation, without reckoning what the public creditors themselves pay to themselves, and without taking one shilling from the stock of the landed interest, our colonies, our Oriental possessions, our skill and industry, our commerce and navigation, at the commencement of this year, were pouring a new annual capital into the kingdom, hardly half a million short of the whole interest of that tremendous debt from which we are taught to shrink in dismay, as from an overwhelming and intolerable oppression.

If, then, the real state of this nation is such as I have described, (and I am only apprehensive that you may think I have taken too much pains to exclude all doubt on this question,) — if no class is lessened in its numbers, or in its stock, or in its conveniences, or even its luxuries, — if they build as many habitations, and as elegant and as commodious as ever, and furnish them with every chargeable decoration and every prodigality of ingenious invention that can be thought of by those who even incumber their necessities with superfluous accommodation, — if they are as numerously attended, — if their equipages are as splendid, — if they regale at table with as much or more variety of plenty than ever, — if they are clad in as expensive and changeful a diver-

sity, according to their tastes and modes, — if they are not deterred from the pleasures of the field by the charges which government has wisely turned from the culture to the sports of the field, — if the theatres are as rich and as well filled, and greater and at a higher price than ever, — and (what is more important than all) if it is plain, from the treasures which are spread over the soil or confided to the winds and the seas, that there are as many who are indulgent to their propensities of parsimony as others to their voluptuous desires, and that the pecuniary capital grows instead of diminishing, — on what ground are we authorized to say that a nation gambolling in an ocean of superfluity is undone by want? With what face can we pretend that they who have not denied any one gratification to any one appetite have a right to plead poverty in order to famish their virtues and to put their duties on short allowance? that they are to take the law from an imperious enemy, and can contribute no longer to the honor of their king, to the support of the independence of their country, to the salvation of that Europe which, if it falls, must crush them with its gigantic ruins? How can they affect to sweat and stagger and groan under their burdens, to whom the mines of Newfoundland, richer than those of Mexico and Peru, are now thrown in as a make-weight in the scale of their exorbitant opulence? What excuse can they have to faint, and creep, and cringe, and prostrate themselves at the footstool of ambition and crime, who, during a short, though violent struggle, which they have never supported with the energy of men, have amassed more to their annual accumulation than all the well-husbanded capital that enabled their ancestors, by long

and doubtful and obstinate conflicts, to defend and liberate and vindicate the civilized world? But I do not accuse the people of England. As to the great majority of the nation, they have done whatever, in their several ranks and conditions and descriptions, was required of them by their relative situations in society: and from those the great mass of mankind cannot depart, without the subversion of all public order. They look up to that government which they obey that they may be protected. They ask to be led and directed by those rulers whom Providence and the laws of their country have set over them, and under their guidance to walk in the ways of safety and honor. They have again delegated the greatest trust which they have to bestow to those faithful representatives who made their true voice heard against the disturbers and destroyers of Europe. They suffered, with unapproving acquiescence, solicitations, which they had in no shape desired, to an unjust and usurping power, whom they had never provoked, and whose hostile menaces they did not dread. When the exigencies of the public service could only be met by their voluntary zeal, they started forth with an ardor which outstripped the wishes of those who had injured them by doubting whether it might not be necessary to have recourse to compulsion. They have in all things reposed an enduring, but not an unreflecting confidence. That confidence demands a full return, and fixes a responsibility on the ministers entire and undivided. The people stands acquitted, if the war is not carried on in a manner suited to its objects. If the public honor is tarnished, if the public safety suffers any detriment, the ministers, not the people, are to answer it, and they alone. Its

armies, its navies, are given to them without stint or restriction. Its treasures are poured out at their feet. Its constancy is ready to second all their efforts. They are not to fear a responsibility for acts of manly adventure. The responsibility which they are to dread is lest they should show themselves unequal to the expectation of a brave people. The more doubtful may be the constitutional and economical questions upon which they have received so marked a support, the more loudly they are called upon to support this great war, for the success of which their country is willing to supersede considerations of no slight importance. Where I speak of responsibility, I do not mean to exclude that species of it which the legal powers of the country have a right finally to exact from those who abuse a public trust: but high as this is, there is a responsibility which attaches on them from which the whole legitimate power of the kingdom cannot absolve them; there is a responsibility to conscience and to glory, a responsibility to the existing world, and to that posterity which men of their eminence cannot avoid for glory or for shame, — a responsibility to a tribunal at which not only ministers, but kings and parliaments, but even nations themselves, must one day answer.

END OF VOL. V.

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